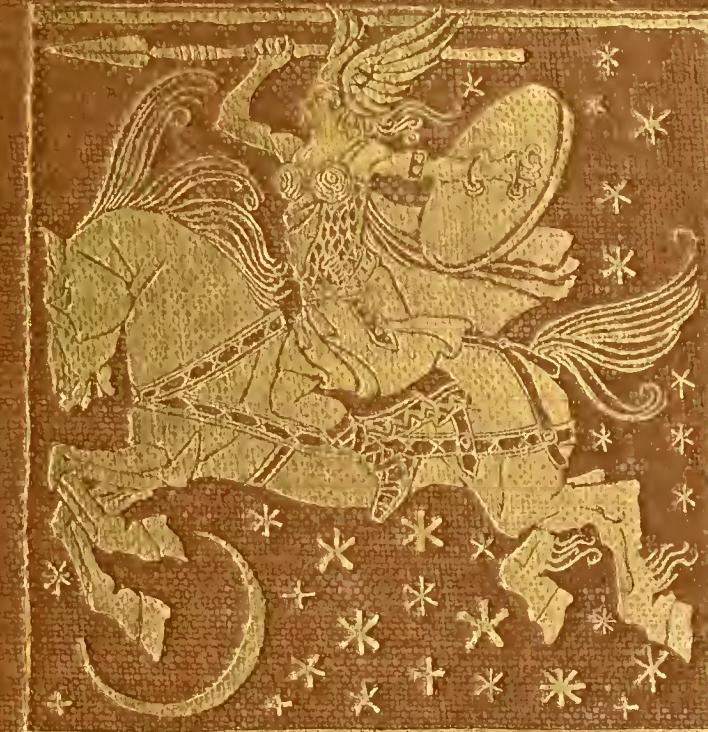


# THE RHINE GOLD & THE VALKYRIE



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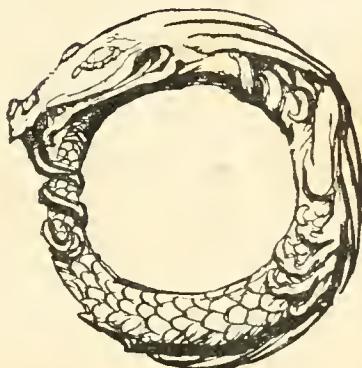




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# THE RING OF THE NIBLUNG



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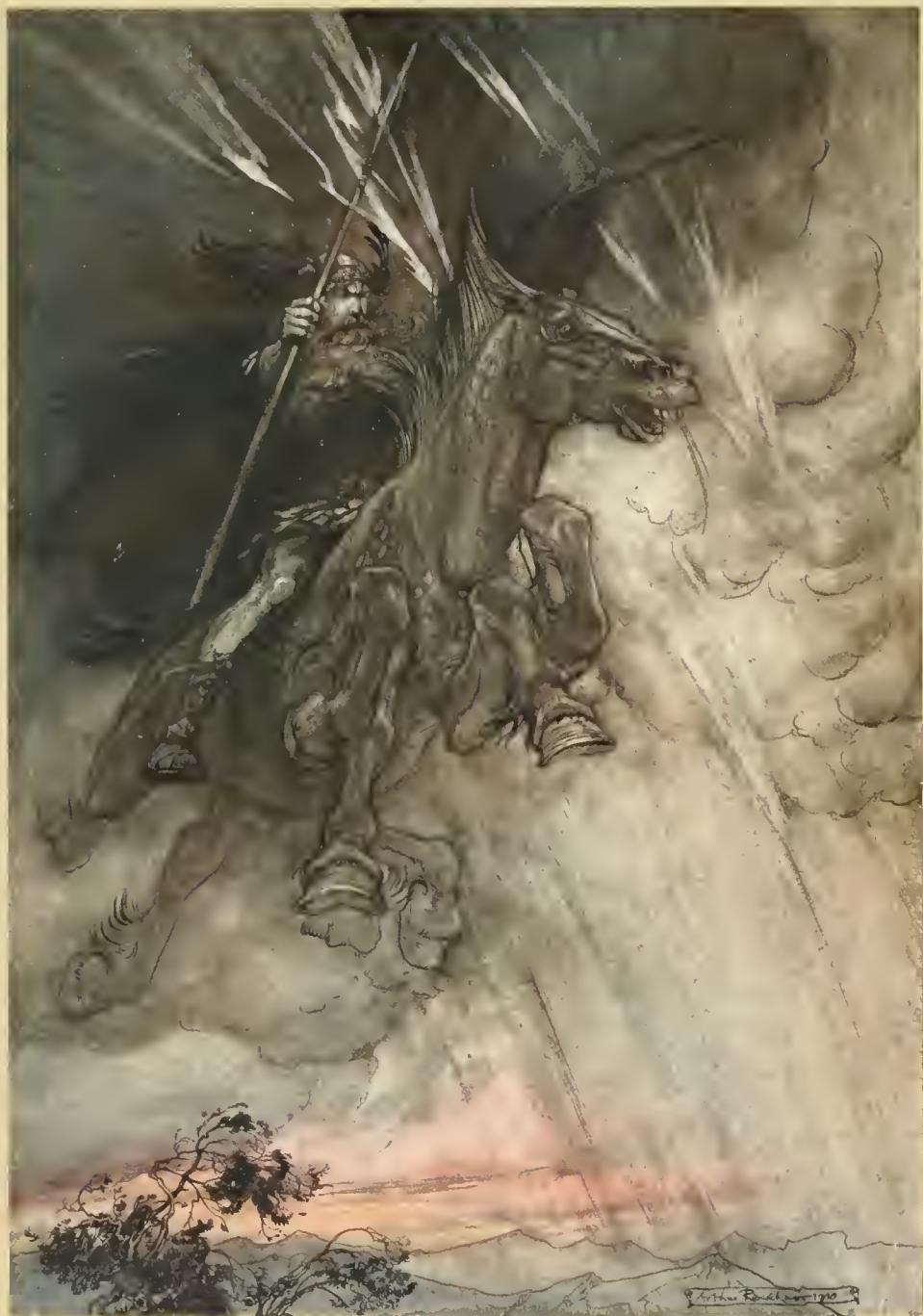
THE RING  
OF THE NIBLUNG  
A TRILOGY WITH A PRE-  
LUDE BY RICHARD WAGNER

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY  
MARGARET ARMOUR

I







“ Raging, Wotan  
Rides to the rock !

Like a storm-wind he comes ! ”

See p. 143

# THE · RHINEGOLD & · THE · VALKYRIE

BY · RICHARD · WAGNER  
WITH · ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY · ARTHUR · RACKHAM



TRANSLATED · BY · MARGARET · ARMOUR

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1910

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## THE RHINEGOLD



## CHARACTERS

GODS : WOTAN, DONNER, FROH, LOGE

NIBELUNGS : ALBERICH, MIME

GIANTS : FASOLT, FAFNER

GODDESSES : FRICKA, FREIA, ERDA

RHINE-MAIDENS : WOGLINDE, WELLGUNDE, FLOSSHILDE

## SCENES OF ACTION

- I. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RHINE
- II. OPEN SPACE ON A MOUNTAIN HEIGHT NEAR THE RHINE
- III. THE SUBTERRANEAN CAVERNS OF NIBELHEIM
- IV. OPEN SPACE AS IN SCENE II.





## FIRST SCENE

*At the bottom of the Rhine*

A greenish twilight, lighter above than below. The upper part is filled with undulating water, which streams restlessly from right to left. Towards the bottom the waves resolve themselves into a mist which grows finer as it descends, so that a space, as high as a man's body from the ground, appears to be quite free from the water, which floats like a train of clouds over the gloomy stretch below. Steep rocky peaks jut up everywhere from the depths, and enclose the entire stage. The ground is a wild confusion of jagged rocks, no part of it being quite level, and on every side deeper fissures are indicated by a still denser gloom. Woglinde circles with graceful swimming movements round the central rock.

**Woglinde**                    Weia ! Waga !  
                                  Roll, O ye billows,  
                                  Rock ye our cradle !  
                                  Wagala weia !  
                                  Wallala, weiala, weia !

**Wellgunde**                    Woglinde, watchest alone ?  
*From above.*

**Woglinde**                    If Wellgunde came we were two.

**Wellgunde**                    How keepest thou watch ?  
*Dives down to the rock.*

**Woglinde**                    Wary of thee.  
*Swimming off, eludes her.*     [They playfully tease and chase one another.]

**Flosshilde**                    Heiaha weia !  
*From above.*                    Ho ! ye wild sisters !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Woglinde

Flosshilde, swim !

Woglinde flies :

Help me to hinder her flying.

Flosshilde  
*Dives down between the two at play.*

The sleeping gold  
Badly ye guard ;  
Watch with more zeal  
The slumberer's bed,

Or dear you'll pay for your sport !

[They swim asunder with merry cries. Flosshilde tries to catch first the one, then the other. They elude her, and then combine to chase her, darting like fish from rock to rock with jests and laughter. Meanwhile Alberich climbs out of a dark ravine on to a rock. He pauses, still surrounded by darkness, and watches the frolic of the Rhine-Maidens with increasing pleasure.

Alberich

Hey, hey ! ye nixies !  
Ye are a lovely,  
Lovable folk !  
From Nibelheim's night  
Fain would I come,  
Would ye be kind to me.

[The maidens, as soon as they hear Alberich's voice, stop playing.

Woglinde

Hei ! Who is there ?

Wollgunde

A voice ! It grows dark !

Flosshilde

Who listens below ?

[They dive down and see the Nibelung.

Woglinde  
and Wollgunde

Fie ! the loathsome one !

**The frolic of the Rhine-Maidens**

See p. 4





## THE RHINEGOLD

Flosshilde  
*Swimming  
up quickly.*      Look to the gold !  
Father warned us  
Of such a foe.  
*[Both the others follow her, and all three  
gather quickly round the central rock.]*

Alberich      You above there !

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens      What wouldst thou below there ?

Alberich      Do I spoil sport  
By standing and gazing here ?  
Dived ye but deeper,  
Fain the Niblung  
Would join in your frolic and play.

Woglinde      He wishes to join us ?

Woglinde      Is he in jest ?

Alberich      Ye gleam above me  
So glad and fair !  
If one would only  
Glide down, how close in my arms  
Fondly clasped she would be !

Flosshilde      I laugh at my fears :  
The foe is in love.

Woglinde      The amorous imp !

Woglinde      Let us approach him.  
*[She sinks down to the top of the rock, whose  
base Alberich has reached.]*

Alberich      Lo ! one of them comes !

Woglinde      Climb up to me here !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich  
*Climbs with gnome-like agility, though with repeated checks, to the summit of the rock. Irritably.*

Horrid rock,  
So slippery, slimy !  
I slide and slip !  
My hands and feet vainly  
Attempt to hold on  
To the slithery surface !  
Vapour damp  
Fills up my nostrils—  
Accursed sneezing !

[*He has got near Woglinde.*

Woglinde  
*Laughing.*

Sneezing tells  
That my suitor comes !

Alberich

Be thou my love !  
Adorable child !

[*He tries to embrace her.*

Woglinde  
*Escaping from him.*

Here thou must woo,  
If woo me thou wilt !

[*She swims up to another rock.*

Alberich  
*Scratching his head.*

Alas ! not yet caught ?  
Come but closer !  
Hard I found  
What so lightly thou didst.

Woglinde  
*Swims to a third rock lower down.*

Deeper descend :  
Thou'l certainly seize me !

Alberich  
*Clambers down quickly.*

Down there it is better !

Woglinde  
*Darts upwards to a higher rock at the side.*

But better still higher !

Wellgunde  
and Flosshilde  
*Laughing.*

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich                    How capture this coy,  
                                  Elusive fish?  
                                 Wait for me, false one!  
                                 [He tries to climb after her in haste.]

Wellgunde                 Heia! my friend there!  
Has sunk down to            Dost thou not hear?  
a lower rock on the other side.

Alberich                 What? Didst thou call?  
Turning round.

Wellgunde                 Be counselled by me:  
                                 Forsake Woglinde,  
                                 Climb up to me now!

Alberich                 Thou art more comely  
Climbs hastily            Far than that coy one;  
over the river-           Her sheen is duller,  
bottom towards           Her skin too smooth.  
Wellgunde.               But thou must deeper  
                                 Dive to delight me!

Wellgunde                 Well, now am I near?  
Sinking down till she is a little nearer him.

Alberich                 Not near enough.  
                                 Thine arms around me  
                                 Tenderly throw,  
                                 That I may fondle  
                                 Thy neck with my fingers,  
                                 And closely may cling  
To thy bosom with love and with longing.

Wellgunde                 Art thou in love?  
                                 For love art thou pining?  
                                 Approach and show me  
                                 Thy face and thy form.  
                                 Fie! thou horrible  
                                 Hunchback, for shame!

## THE RHINEGOLD

Swarthy, horny-skinned  
Rogue of a dwarf !  
Find thou a sweetheart  
Fonder than I !

**Alberich**  
*Tries to detain her by force.*  
I may not be fair,  
But fast I can hold !

**Wellgunde**  
*Swimming up quickly to the middle rock.*  
Hold firm, or I will escape !

**Woglinde**  
and **Flosshilde**  
*Laughing.*  
Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

**Alberich**  
*Angrily calling after Wellgunde.*  
Fickle maid !  
Bony, cold-blooded fish !  
Fair if I seem not,  
Pretty and playful,  
Smooth and sleek—  
Hei ! if I am so loathsome  
Give thy love to the eels !

**Flosshilde**  
What ails thee, dwarf ?  
Daunted so soon ?  
Though two have been wooed,  
Still a third waits thee,  
Solace sweet  
Fain at a word to grant !

**Alberich**  
Soothing song  
Sounds in my ear !  
'Twas well I found  
Three and not one !  
The chance is I charm one of many,  
Whilst, single, no one would choose me !  
Hither come gliding,  
And I will believe !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Flosshilde  
*Dives down to*  
Alberich.

How senseless are ye,  
Silly sisters,  
Not to see he is fair !

Alberich  
*Hastening*  
towards her.

I well may deem them  
Dull and ill-favoured,  
Seeing how lovely thou art !

Flosshilde

Sing on ! Thy song,  
So soft and sweet,  
Entrancing sounds in my ear !

Alberich  
*Caresing*  
her with  
confidence.

My heart burns  
And flutters and fails,  
Flattered by praises so sweet !

Flosshilde  
*Gently*  
resisting  
him.

Thy grace and beauty  
Make glad my eye ;  
And thy smile refreshes  
My soul like balm !

[She draws him tenderly towards her.  
Dearest of men !

Alberich

Sweetest of maids !

Flosshilde

Wert thou but mine !

Alberich

Wert mine for ever !

Flosshilde  
*Ardently.*

To be pierced by thy glance,  
To be pricked by thy beard,  
To see and to feel them for aye !  
Might thy hair hard as bristles  
Flow ever more  
Enraptured Flosshilde wreathing !  
And thy form like a frog's,  
And the croak of thy voice—  
O could I, dumb with amaze,  
Marvel forever on these !

## THE RHINEGOLD

**Woglinde** Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !  
and **Wellgunde**  
*Dive down close to them and laugh.*

**Alberich** Wretches, dare ye thus scoff ?  
*Starting in alarm.*  
**Flosshilde** A suitable end to the song.  
*Suddenly darting away from him. [She swims up quickly with her sisters.*

**Woglinde** Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !  
and **Wellgunde**  
*Laughing.*

**Alberich** Woe's me ! Ah, woe's me !  
*In a waiting voice.*  
Alas ! Alas !  
The third one, so dear,  
Does she too betray ?  
O sly and shameful  
Worthless and dissolute wantons !  
Live ye on lies  
Alone, O ye false nixie brood ?

**The Three Rhine-Maidens** Wallala ! Wallala !  
Lalalelai leialalei !  
Heia ! Heia ! ha ! ha !  
Shame on thee goblin,  
Scolding down yonder !  
Cease, and do as we bid thee !  
Faint-hearted wooer,  
Why couldst not hold  
The maid, when won, more fast ?  
True are we,  
And troth we keep  
With lovers when once caught.  
Grasp then and hold ;  
Away with all fear !  
In the waves we scarce can escape.  
Wallala !

The Rhine-Maidens teasing Alberich



Arthur Rackham 1910



## THE RHINEGOLD

Lalaleia! Leialalei!  
Heia! Heia! Ha hei!

[They swim apart hither and thither, now lower, now higher, to provoke Alberich to give chase.

Alberich

Fiercely within me  
Passionate fires  
Consume and flame!  
Love and fury,  
Wild, irresistible,  
Lash me to frenzy!  
So laugh and lie your fill—  
One of you I desire,  
And one must yield to my yearning!

[He starts chasing them with desperate energy. He climbs with terrible agility, and, springing from rock to rock, tries to catch one maiden after another. They keep eluding him with mocking laughter. He stumbles and falls into the abyss, and clammers up quickly again and resumes the chase. They sink down a little towards him; he almost reaches them, but falls back again, and once more tries to catch them. At last he pauses out of breath, and, foaming with rage, stretches his clenched fist up towards the maidens.

Alberich

If but this fist had one!

[He remains speechless with rage, gazing upwards, when he is suddenly attracted and arrested by the following spectacle. Through the water a light of continually increasing brilliance breaks from above, and, at a point near the top of the middle rock, kindles to a radiant and dazzling golden gleam. A magical light streams from this through the waves.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Woglinde                    Look, sisters !  
                               The wakener laughs to the deep.

Wellgunde                 Through the billows green  
                               The blissful slumberer greets.

Flosshilde                 He kisses the eyelid,  
                               Making it open ;  
                               Bathed in splendour,  
                               Behold it smiles,  
                               Sending, like a star,  
                               Gleaming light through the waves.

The Three Rhine-Maidens     Heia jaheia !  
Swimming gracefully round the cliff together.     Heia jaheia !  
                               Wallala la la la leia jahei !  
                               Rhinegold !  
                               Rhinegold !  
                               Radiant delight,  
                               How glorious and glad thy smile,  
                               Over the water  
                               Shooting effulgence afar !  
                               Heia jahei !  
                               Heia jaheia !  
                               Waken, friend !  
                               Wake in joy !  
                               That we may please thee,  
                               Merry we'll play,  
                               Waters afire,  
                               Billows aflame,  
                               As, blissfully bathing,  
                               Dancing and singing,  
We                               We dive and encircle thy bed !  
                               Rhinegold !  
                               Rhinegold !  
                               Heia jaheia !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Heia jahei!

Wallala la la la heia jahei !

[With increasing mirthful abandonment the maidens swim round the rock. The water is filled with a glimmering golden light.

Alberich

*Whose eyes,  
strongly attract*

What is it, sleek ones,  
That yonder gleams and shines ?  
*ed by the radiance, stare fixcdly at the gold.*

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Where dost thou hail from, O churl,  
Of the Rhinegold not to have heard ?

Woglinde

Knows not the elf  
Of the famed eye golden  
That wakes and sleeps in turn ?

Möglinde

Of the star resplendent  
Down in the depths  
Whose light illuminates the waves ?

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens  
Together.

See how gaily  
We glide in the glory !  
Wouldst thou also  
Be bathed in brightness,  
Come, float and frolic with us !  
Wallala la la leia lalei !  
Wallala la la leia jahei !

Alberich

Has the gold no value  
Apart from your games ?  
It were not worth getting !

Möglinde

He would not scoff,  
Scorning the gold,  
Did he but know all its wonders !

Woglinde

That man surely  
The earth would inherit

## THE RHINEGOLD

Who from the Rhinegold  
Fashioned the ring  
Which measureless power imparts.

Flosshilde

Our father told us,  
And strictly bade us  
Guard with prudence  
The precious hoard  
That no thief from the water might steal it.  
Be still, then, chattering fools.

Weliunde

O prudent sister,  
Why chide and reproach?  
Hast thou not heard  
That one alone  
Can hope to fashion the gold?

Woglinde

Only the man  
Who love defies,  
Only the man  
From love who flies  
Can learn and master the magic  
That makes a ring of the gold.

Weliunde

Secure then are we  
And free from care:  
For love is part of living;  
No one would live without loving.

Woglinde

And least of all he,  
The languishing elf,  
With pangs of love  
Pining away.

Flosshilde

I fear him not  
Who should surely know,  
By his savage lust  
Almost inflamed.

"Mock away! Mock!  
The Niblung makes for your toy!"

See p. 15





## THE RHINEGOLD

Wellgunde

A brimstone brand  
In the surging waves,  
In lovesick frenzy  
Hissing loud.

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens  
*Together.*

c

Wallala ! Wallaleia la la !  
Join in our laughter,  
Lovable elf !  
In the golden glory  
How gallant thy sheen !  
O come, lovely one, laugh as we laugh !  
Heia jaheia !  
Heia jaheia !  
Wallala la la la leia jahei !  
[They swim, laughing, backwards and forwards in the light.

Alberich  
*His eyes fixed  
on the gold,  
has listened  
attentively to  
the sisters' rapid  
chatter.*

Could I truly  
The whole earth inherit through thee ?  
If love be beyond me  
My cunning could compass delight ?  
[In a terribly loud voice.  
Mock away ! Mock !  
The Niblung makes for your toy !  
[Raging he springs on to the middle rock, and  
clammers to the top. The maidens scatter,  
screaming, and swim upwards on different  
fides.

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Heia ! Heia ! heia jahei !  
Save yourselves !  
The elf is distraught !  
Swirling waters splash  
At every leap :  
The creature's crazy with love !  
Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich

*Reaching the top  
with a last spring.*

Still undismayed?

Go, wanton in darkness,  
Water-born brood!

[*He stretches his hand out towards the gold.*

My hand quenches your light;  
I tear the gold from the rock;  
Forged be the ring for revenge!

Bear witness, ye floods—  
I forswear love and curse it!

[*He tears the gold from the rock with terrific force, and immediately plunges with it into the depths, where he quickly disappears. Sudden darkness envelops the scene. The maidens dive down after the robber.*

The Three

Rhine-Maidens

Seize the despoiler!

Rescue the gold!

Help us! Help us!

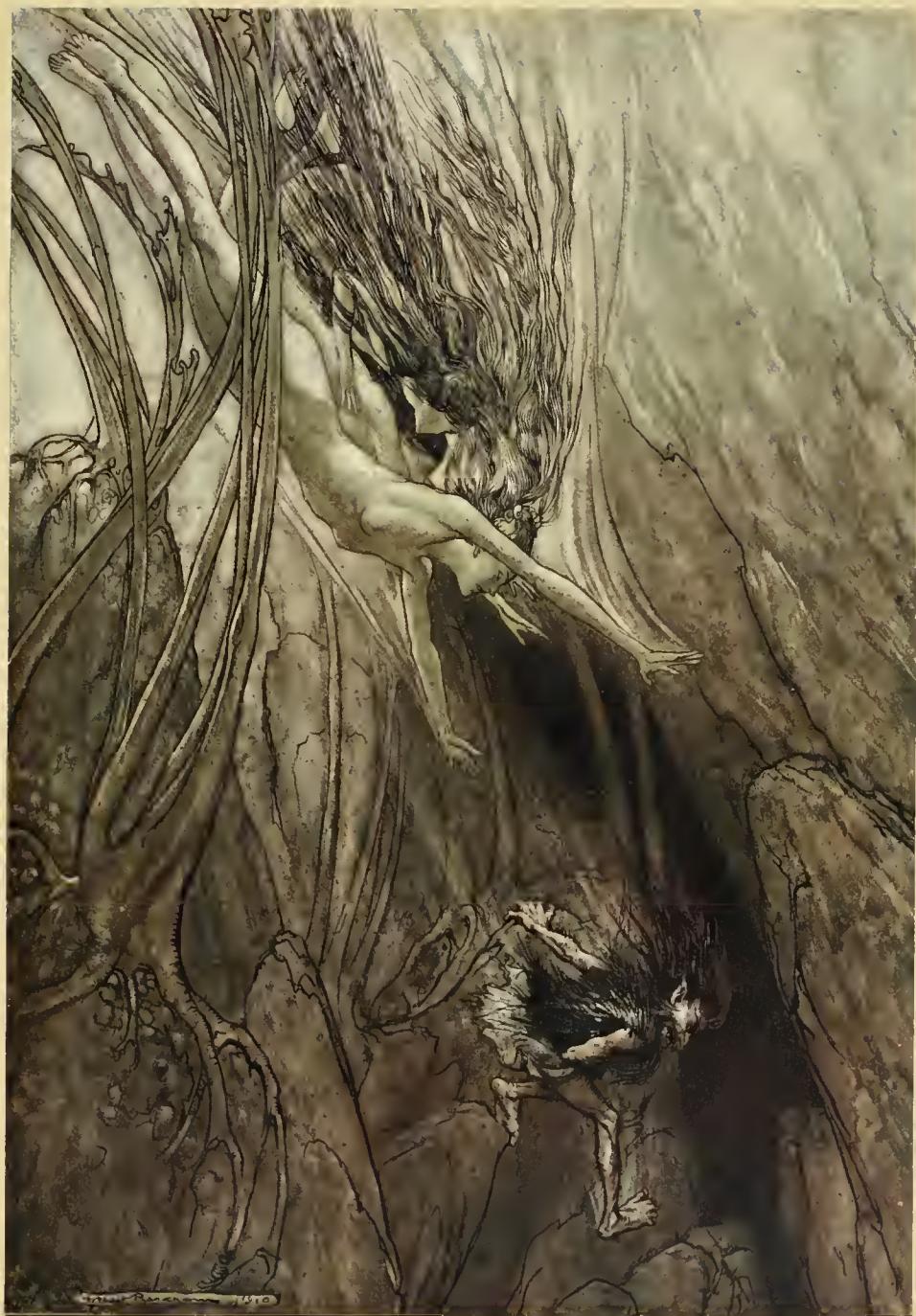
Woe! Woe!

[*The water sinks with them. From the lowest depth Alberich's shrill, mocking laughter rings up. The rocks are hidden by impenetrable darkness. The whole stage from top to bottom is filled with black waves, which for some time appear to sink even lower.*



“Seize the despoiler !  
Rescue the gold !  
Help us ! Help us !  
Woe ! Woe !”

See p. 16







## SECOND SCENE

The waves have gradually changed into clouds which, becoming lighter and lighter by degrees, finally disperse in a fine mist. As the mist vanishes upwards in light little clouds an open space on a mountain height becomes visible in the dim light which precedes dawn. At one side Wotan with Fricka beside him, both asleep, lie on a flowery bank. The dawning day illuminates with increasing brightness a castle with glittering pinnacles which stands on the summit of a cliff in the background. Between this and the foreground a deep valley is visible through which the Rhine flows.

Fricka

*Awakes; her gaze falls on the castle, which has become plainly visible; alarmed.*

Wotan

*Continuing to dream.*

Wotan ! My lord ! Awaken !

The happy hall of delight  
Is guarded by gate and door :  
Manhood's honour,  
Power for aye,  
Rise to my lasting renown !

Fricka

*Shakes him.*

Up from deceitful  
Bliss of a dream !

My husband, wake and consider !

Wotan

*Awakes and raises himself slightly. His glance is immediately arrested by the view of the castle.*

The walls everlasting are built !  
On yonder summit  
The Gods' abode  
Proudly rears  
Its radiant strength !  
As I nursed it in dream  
And desired it to be,  
Strong it stands,  
Fair to behold,  
Brave and beautiful pile !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Fricka

While thou rejoicest,  
Joyless am I.  
Thou hast thy hall;  
My heart fears for Freia.  
Heedless one, hast thou forgotten  
The price that was to be paid?  
The work is finished,  
And forfeit the pledge:  
Hast thou then no care for the cost?

Wotan

My bargain well I remember  
With them who built the abode.  
'Twas a pact tamed them,  
The obstinate race,  
So that this hallowed  
Hall they have built me.  
It stands—the strong ones' doing:—  
Fret not thou, counting the cost.

Fricka

O laughing, insolent lightness!  
Mirth how cruel and callous!  
Had I but known of thy pact,  
The trick had never been played;  
But far from your counsels  
Ye men kept the women,  
That, deaf to us and in peace,  
Alone ye might deal with the giants.  
So without shame  
Ye promised them Freia,  
Freia, my beautiful sister,  
Proud of playing the thief.  
What remains holy  
Or precious to men  
Once grown greedy of might?

Wotan  
*Calmly.*

From such greed  
Was Fricka then free  
Herself when the castle she craved?

## THE RHINEGOLD

Fricka

I was forced to ponder some means  
To keep my husband faithful,  
True to me when his fancy  
Tempted him far from his home.

Halls high and stately,  
Decked to delight thee,  
Were to constrain thee  
To peaceful repose.

But thou hadst the work designed  
Intent on war alone ;  
It was to add  
More to thy might still,  
To stir up to tumult still fiercer  
That built were the towering walls

Wotan  
Smiling.

Wouldst thou, O Wife !  
In the castle confine me,  
To me, the god, must be granted,  
Faithful at home,  
The right to wage war  
And conquer the world from without.  
Ranging and changing  
All men love :  
That sport at least thou must leave me.

Fricka

Cold, hard-hearted,  
Merciless man !  
For the idle baubles,  
Empire and sway,  
Thou stakest in insolent scorn  
Love and a woman's worth !

Wotan

When I went wooing, to win thee  
I staked ungrudging,  
Gladly one of my eyes :  
What folly now then to scold !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Women I honour  
Beyond thy desire !  
I will not abandon  
Frei, the fair :  
Such never was my intent.

**Fricka**  
*Anxiously looking towards a point not on the stage.*

Then succour her now :  
Defenceless, in fear,  
Hither she hastens for help !

**Freia**  
*Enters as if flying from some one.*

Help me, sister !  
Shield me, O brother !  
From yonder mountain  
Menaces Fasolt :  
He comes to bear me off captive.

**Wotan**

Let him come !  
Sawest thou Loge ?

**Fricka**

To this tricky deceiver  
O why wilt thou trust ?  
He always snares thee anew,  
Though from his snares thou hast suffered.

**Wotan**

I ask for no aid  
Where simple truth suffices ;  
But to turn the spite  
Of foes to profit,  
Craft and cunning alone  
Can teach, as by Loge employed.  
He whose advice I obeyed  
Has promised ransom for Freia :  
On him my faith I have fixed.

**Fricka**

And art left in the lurch.  
The giants come.  
Lo ! hither they stride :  
Where lingers now thine ally ?

## THE RHINEGOLD

**F**reia

Where tarry ye, my brothers,  
When help ye should bring me,  
Weak and bartered away by my kin ?  
O help me, Donner !  
Hither ! Hither !  
Rescue Freia, my Froh !

**F**ricka

Now the knaves who plotted and tricked  
thee  
Abandon thee in thy need.

[*Fasolt and Fafner, both of gigantic stature, enter, armed with stout clubs.*

**F**asolt

Soft sleep  
Sealed thine eyes  
While we, both sleepless,  
Built the castle walls :  
Working hard  
Wearied not,  
Heaping, heaving  
Heavy stones.  
Tower steep,  
Door and gate  
Keep and guard  
Thy goodly castle halls.

[*Pointing to the castle.*

There stands  
What we builded,  
Shining fair  
Beneath the sun.  
Enter in  
And pay the price !

**W**otan

Name, Workers, your wage.  
What payment will appease you ?

**F**asolt

We made the terms  
That seemed to us meet.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Hast thou forgot so soon?  
Freia, the fair one,  
Holda, the free one—  
The bargain is  
We bear her away.

**Wotan**  
*Quickly.*

Ye must be mad  
To moot such a thing!  
Ask some other wage;  
Freia I will not grant.

**Fasolt**  
*Stands for a  
space speechless  
with angry  
surprise.*

What is this? Ha!  
Wouldst deceive?—  
Go back on thy bond?  
What thy spear wards  
Are they but sport,  
All the runes of solemn bargain?

**Fafner**

O trusty brother!  
Fool, dost now see the trick?

**Fasolt**

Son of light,  
Light, unstable,  
Hearken! Have a care!  
In treaties keep thou troth!  
What thou art  
Thou art only by treaties,  
For, built on bonds,  
There are bounds to thy might.  
Though cunning thou,  
More clever than we:  
Though we once freemen,  
Are pledged to peace,  
Cursèd be all thy wisdom;—  
Peaceful promises perish!—  
Wilt thou not open,  
Honest and frank

Freia, the fair one





## THE RHINEGOLD

Stand fast by a bargain once fixed.  
A stupid giant  
Tells thee this :  
O wise one, take it from him !

How sly to judge us serious  
When plainly we were but jesting !  
The beautiful Goddess  
Light and bright—  
For churls what charm could she have ?

Jeerest thou ?  
Ha ! how unjust !  
Ye who by beauty rule,  
Proud and radiant race !  
How foolish, striving  
For towers of stone,  
Woman's love to pledge—  
Price of walls and of halls !  
We dolts, despising ease,  
Sweating with toil-hardened hands,  
Have worked, that a woman  
With gentle delight  
In our midst might sojourn  
And ye call the pact a jest ?

Cease thy childish chatter ;  
No gain look we to get.  
Freia's charms  
Mean little ;  
But it means much,  
If from the Gods we remove her.  
Golden apples  
Ripen within her garden ;  
She alone  
Grows the apples and tends them.  
The goodly fruit

## THE RHINEGOLD

Gives to her kinsfolk,  
Who eat thereof,  
Youth everlasting.  
Sick and pale,  
Their beauty would perish,  
Old and weak,  
Wasting away,

Were not Freia among them.

[*Roughly.*

From their midst, therefore, Freia must  
forth !

**Wotan**  
*Afide.*

Loge lingers long !

**Fasolt**

We wait for thy word !

**Wotan**

Ask some other wage !

**Fasolt**

No other : Freia alone !

**Fafner**

Thou there, follow us !

[*Fafner and Fasolt press towards Freia.*  
*Froh and Donner enter in haste.*

**Freia**

Help ! Help from the harsh ones !

**Froh**

To me, Freia !

*Clasping Freia  
in his arms.*

[*To Fafner.*

Back, overbold one !

Froh shields the fair one !

**Donner**

Fasolt and Fafner,

*Confronting  
the giants.*

Have ye not felt

With what weight my hammer falls ?

**Fafner**

What means thy threat ?

**Fasolt**

What wouldest thou here ?

No strife we desire ;  
We want but our due reward.

## THE RHINEGOLD

**Donner**

Oft I've doled out

Giants their due :

Come, your reward is here

Waiting, full measure and more !

[*He swings his hammer.*

**Wotan**

*Stretching out  
his spear between  
the combatants.*

Hold, thou fierce one !

Nothing by force !

All bonds and treaties

My spear protects ;

Spare then thy hammer's haft !

**Freia**

Woe's me ! Woe's me !

Wotan forsakes me !

**Fricka**

Can such be thy thought,

Merciless man ?

**Wotan**

*Turns away  
and sees Loge  
coming.*

There comes Loge !

Hot is thy haste

Smoothly to settle

Thy sorry, badly-made bargain !

**Loge**

*Has come  
up out of the  
valley in the  
background.*

What is this bargain

That I am blamed for ?—

The one with the giants

That thou thyself didst decide ?

O'er hill and o'er hollow

Drives me my whim ;

House and hearth

I do not crave.

Donner and Froh,

They dream but of roof and room :

Wedding, must have

A home in which to dwell,

A stately hall,

A fortress fast.

## THE RHINEGOLD

It was such Wotan wished.  
Hall and house,  
Castle, court,  
The blissful abode  
Now stands complete and strong.  
I proved the lordly  
Pile myself ;  
In fear of flaws,  
Scanning it close.  
Fasolt and Fafner  
Faithful I found ;  
Firm-bedded is each stone.  
I was not slothful  
Like many here :  
Who calls me slaggard, he lies !

Wotan

Cunningly  
Thou wouldst escape !  
Warned be, and wisely  
Turn from attempts to deceive.  
Of all the Gods  
I alone stood by thee  
As thy friend,  
In the gang that trusted thee not.  
Now speak, and to the point !  
For when the builders at first  
As wage Freia demanded,  
I gave way only,  
Trusting thy word  
When thou didst solemnly promise  
To ransom the noble pledge.

Loge

Perplexed to puzzle,  
Plans to ponder  
For its redeeming—  
That promise I gave ;

## THE RHINEGOLD

But to discover  
What cannot be,  
What none can do,  
No man can possibly promise.

**Fricka** See the treacherous  
Rogue thou didst trust !

**Froh** Named art Loge,  
But liar I call thee !

**Donner** Accursèd flame,  
I will quench thy fire !

**Loge** From their shame to shelter,  
Foolish folk flout me.

[*Donner threatens to strike Loge.*

**Wotan** Stepping  
between them.  
Forbear and let him alone !  
Ye wot not Loge's wiles.  
His advice,  
Given slowly, gains  
Both in weight and in worth.

**Fafner** Do not dally ;  
Promptly pay !

**Fasolt** Long waits our reward.

**Wotan** Turns sternly  
to Loge.  
Speak up surly one !  
Fail me not !  
How far hast thou ranged and roamed ?

**Loge** Still with reproach  
Is Loge paid !  
Concerned but for thee,  
Thorough and swift,  
I searched and ransacked  
To the ends of the earth

## THE RHINEGOLD

To find a ransom for Freia  
Fair to the giants and just.  
In vain the search,  
Convincing at last  
That the world contains  
Nothing so sweet

That a man will take it instead  
Of woman's love and delight.

[*All seem surprised and taken aback.*

Where life moves and has being,  
In water, earth and air

I questioned,  
Asking of all things,  
Where weak still is strength,  
And germs only stirring,  
What men thought dear—  
And stronger deemed—

Than woman's love and delight.

But where life moves and has being  
My questions met  
But with laughter and scorn.  
In water, earth and air  
Woman and love  
Will none forego.

[*Varied gestures of amazement.*

One man, one only,  
I met who, renouncing love,  
Prized ruddy gold  
Above any woman's grace.  
The Rhine's pure-gleaming children  
Told me of their sorrow.

The Nibelung,  
Night-Alberich,  
Wooed for the favour  
Of the swimmers in vain,  
And vengeance took,

"The Rhine's pure-gleaming children  
Told me of their sorrow"

See p. 28





## THE RHINEGOLD

Stealing the Rhinegold they guard.  
He thinks it now  
A thing beyond price,  
Greater than woman's grace.  
For their glittering toy  
Thus torn from the deep  
The sorrowful maids lamented.  
They pray, Wotan,  
Pleading to thee,  
That thy wrath may fall on the robber ;  
The gold too  
They would have thee grant them  
To guard in the water for ever.  
Loge promised  
The maidens to tell thee,  
And, keeping faith, he has told.

Wotan

Dull thou must be  
Or downright knavish !  
In parlous plight myself,  
What help have I for others ?

Fasolt

*Who has been  
listening atten-  
tively, to Fafner.*

The Niblung has much annoyed us ;  
I greatly grudge him this Rhinegold ;  
But such his craft and cunning,  
He has never been caught.

Fafner

Other malice  
Ponders the Niblung ;  
Gains he might from gold  
Listen, Loge !  
Tell us the truth.  
What wondrous gift has the gold,  
That the dwarf desires it so ?

Loge

A plaything,  
In the waves providing  
Children with laughter and sport,

## THE RHINEGOLD

It gives, when to golden  
Ring it is rounded,  
Power and might unmatched ;  
It wins its owner the world.

Wotan  
*Thoughtfully.*

Rumours I have heard  
Of the Rhinegold ;  
Runes of riches  
Hide in its ruddy glow ;  
Pelf and power  
Are by the ring bestowed.

Fricka  
*Sofly to Loge.*

Could this gaud,  
This gleaming trinket  
Forged from the gold,  
Be worn by a woman too ?

Loge

The wife who wore  
That glittering charm  
Never would lose  
Her husband's love—  
That charm which dwarfs are welding,  
Working in thrall to the ring.

Fricka  
*Coaxingly to Wotan.*

O could but my husband  
Come by the ring !  
  
Methinks it were wisdom,  
Won I the ring to my service.  
But say, Loge,  
How shall I learn  
To forge and fashion it true ?

Loge

A magic rune  
Can round the golden ring.  
No one knows it,  
Yet plain the spell to him  
Who happy love forswears.

[Wotan turns away in annoyance.

## THE RHINEGOLD

That suits thee not ;  
Thou art too late too.  
Alberich did not delay ;  
Fearless he mastered  
The potent spell,  
*[Harshly.]*  
And wrought aright was the ring.

Donner  
*To Wotan*

We should all be  
Under the dwarf,  
Were not the ring from him wrested.

Wotan

The ring I must capture !

Froh

Lightly now,  
Without cursing love it were won.

Loge  
*Harshly.*

Just so :  
Without guile, as in children's games !

Wotan

Then tell us how.

Loge

By theft !  
What a thief stole  
Steal thou from the thief ;  
How better could object be won ?  
But with baleful arms  
Battles Alberich.  
Wary, wise  
Must be thy scheming,  
If the thief thou wouldest confound,  
*[With warmth.]*  
And restore the ruddy  
And golden toy,  
The Rhinegold, to the maidens.  
For this they pray and implore.

Wotan

The river-maidens ?  
What profit were mine ?

## THE RHINEGOLD

Fricka

Of that billow-born brood  
Bring me no tidings,  
For they have wooed  
To my woe  
Full many a man to their caves.

[Wotan stands silent, struggling with himself. The other Gods gaze at him in mute suspense. Fafner, meanwhile, has been consulting aside with Fasolt.]

Fafner

To Fasolt

Worth far more than Freia  
Were the glittering gold.  
Eternal youth, too, were his  
Who could use the charm in its  
quest.

[Fasolt's gestures indicate that he is being convinced against his will. Fafner and Fasolt approach Wotan again.]

Fafner

Hear, Wotan,  
Our word while we wait ;  
Freia we will restore you,  
And will take  
Paltrier payment :  
The Niblung's red-gleaming gold  
Will guerdon us giants rude.

Wotan

Ye must be mad !  
With what I possess not  
How can I, shameless ones, pay you ?

Fafner

Hard labour  
Went to those walls ;  
How easy  
With fraud-aided force  
(What our malice never achieved)  
The Niblung to break and bind !

Fasolt suddenly seizes Freia and drags her to one side  
with Fafner

See p. 33





## THE RHINEGOLD

**Wotan**  
*More quickly.*

Why should I make  
War on the Niblung?—  
Fight, your foe to confound?  
Insolent  
And greedily grasping  
Dolts you grow through my debt!

**Fasolt**  
*Suddenly seizes Freia and drags her to one side with Fafner.*

Maiden, come!  
We claim thee ours!  
As pledge thou shalt be held  
Till the ransom is paid.

**Freia**  
*Screaming.*

Woe's me! Woe's me! Woe!

**Fafner**

From your midst  
We bear her forth!  
Till evening—mark it well!—  
As a pledge she is ours.  
We will return then.  
But when we come,  
If the Rhinegold be not ready,  
The Rhinegold bright and red—

**Fasolt**

The respite is ended,  
Freia is forfeit  
And bides among us for aye!

**Freia**

Sister! Brothers!  
Save me! Help!

[*The giants hasten off, dragging Freia with them.*]

**Froh**

Up! Follow fast!

**Donner**

Fall now the heavens!

[*They look inquiringly at Wotan.*]

**Freia**  
*In the distance.*

Save me! Help!

## THE RHINEGOLD

**Loge**  
*Looking after  
the giants.*

Downward over stock and stone  
Striding they go ;  
Through the ford across the Rhine  
Wade now the robbers.  
Sad at heart  
Hangs Freia,  
Thrown rudely over rough shoulders !  
Heia ! hei !  
The louts, how they lumber along !  
Through the Rhine valley they reel.  
Not till Riesenheim's march  
Is reached will they rest !

[*He turns to the Gods.*

How darkly Wotan doth dream !  
What ails the high, happy Gods ?

[*A pale mist, gradually increasing in density, fills the stage. Seen through it the Gods look more and more wan and aged. All stand in dismay and apprehension regarding Wotan, whose eyes are fixed broodingly on the ground.*

**Loge**

Does a mist mock me ?  
Tricks me a dream ?  
Dismayed and wan,  
How swiftly ye fade !  
Lo ! the bloom forsakes your cheeks,  
And quenched is the light of your eyes !  
Courage, Froh !  
Day's but begun !  
From thy hand, Donner,  
The hammer is falling !  
And why frets Fricka ?  
Sees she with sorrow  
That Wotan's hair, growing grey,  
Has made him gloomy and old ?

The Gods grow wan and aged at the loss of Freia

See p. 34





## THE RHINEGOLD

Fricka

Woe's me ! Woe's me !  
What does it mean ?

Donner

My hand sinks down.

Froh

My heart stands still.

Loge

I have it : hear what ye lack !  
    Of Freia's fruit  
Ye have not partaken to-day.  
    The golden apples  
    Within her garden  
Restored you your strength and your  
    youth,  
Ate ye thereof each day.  
    The garden's guardian  
    In pledge has been given.  
    On the branches dries  
    And droops the fruit,  
To drop soon and decay.  
    My loss is lighter,  
For still did Freia,  
    Stingy to me,  
Stint the delectable fruit.  
    Not half as godlike  
Am I, ye high ones, as you !

[Freely, but quickly and harshly.

But ye trusted solely  
    To the fruit that makes young,  
As well both the giants wist.  
    Your life they played for,  
    Plotted to take ;  
Contrive so that they fail.  
    Lacking the apples,  
    Old and worn,  
    Grey and weary,

## THE RHINEGOLD

Wasting, the scoff of the world,  
The Gods must pine and pass.

**Fricka**  
*Anxiously.*

Wotan, alas !  
Unhappy man !  
See what thy laughing  
Lightness has brought us—  
Scoff and scorn for all !

**Wotan**  
*Coming to a  
sudden resolve,  
starts up.*

Up, Loge,  
And follow me !  
To Nibelheim hastening downward,  
I go in search of the gold.

**Loge**

The Rhine-daughters  
Thy aid invoked :  
Not vainly they hoped for thy help then ?

**Wotan**  
*Angrily.*

Fool, be silent !  
Freia, the fair one—  
Freia's ransom we go for.

**Loge**

Where thou wouldest go  
Gladly I lead.  
Shall we dive  
Sheer through the depths of the Rhine ?

**Wotan**

Not through the Rhine.

**Loge**

Then swift let us swing  
Through this smoky chasm.  
Together, come, creep we in !

[He goes in front and vanishes at the side  
through a cleft, from which, immediately  
afterwards, sulphurous vapour streams  
forth.

**Wotan**

Ye others wait  
Till evening here ;

## THE RHINEGOLD

The golden ransom  
When got will again make us young.

[He descends after Loge into the chasm.  
The sulphurous vapour which rises from it  
spreads over the whole stage and quickly  
fills it with thick clouds. Those who  
remain behind are soon hidden.

Donner

Fare thee well, Wotan !

Froh

Good luck ! Good luck !

Fricka

O come back soon  
To thy sorrowing wife !

[The sulphurous vapour darkens till it  
becomes a black cloud, which rises upwards  
from below. This then changes to a dark,  
rocky cavern which keeps rising, so that the  
stage seems to sink deeper and deeper into  
the earth.





### THIRD SCENE

*From various points in the distance ruddy lights gleam out. An increasing clamour, as of smiths at work, is heard on all sides. The clang of the anvils dies away. A vast subterranean chasm becomes visible which seems to open into narrow gorges on all sides. Alberich drags the screaming Mime out of a side cleft.*

Alberich

Héhé ! Héhé !  
Come here ! Come here !  
Mischievous dwarf !  
Prettily pinched  
Promptly thou'lt be  
Hast thou not ready,  
Wrought to my wish,  
The dainty thing I desire !

Mime  
*Howling.*

Ohé ! Ohé !  
Oh ! Oh !  
Let me alone !  
It is forged ;  
Heeding thy hest  
I laboured hard  
Till it was done !  
Take but thy nails from my ear !

Alberich

Then why this delay  
To show thy work ?

Mime

I feared that something  
Might still be wanting.

Mime, howling. "Ohé ! Ohé !  
Oh ! Oh !"  
See p. 38



A. Radem - 1910



## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich

What is there to finish?

Mime

*Embarrassed.*

Here—and there—

Alberich

How here and there?  
Hand me the thing!

[He tries to catch hold of his ear again. In his terror Mime drops a piece of metal-work which he has been clutching convulsively. Alberich picks it up hastily and examines it with care.

Rogue, observe!

See how all wrought is  
Well finished andfeat,

Done as desired!

The simpleton wants  
Slyly to trick me  
And keep by cunning  
The wonderful work,  
Though all his skill  
Came alone from my craft.

Thou art discovered, thief.

[He puts the Tarnhelm on his head.  
The helmet fits the head;  
But will the spell prosper too?

[Very softly.  
“Night and darkness,  
Seen of none!”

[He vanishes, and a pillar of cloud takes his place.  
Brother, canst see me?

Mime

*Looks round in amaze.*

Where art thou? I see no one.

Alberich

*Invisible.*

Then feel me instead,

Thou lazy scamp!

Take that for thy thievish thoughts!

## THE RHINEGOLD

Mime                            Ohé !    Ohé !  
*I writhes under the*                    Oh !    Oh !    Oh !  
*lashes he receives, the sound of which is heard without the whip being seen.*

Alberich                        Ha !    ha !    ha !  
*Invisible and*                        Ha !    ha !    ha !  
*laughing.*                        I thank thee, blockhead ;  
    Thy work has stood the test.  
    Hoho !    Hoho !  
    Nibelungs all  
    Bow now to Alberich !  
    For he is everywhere,  
    Waiting and watching ;  
    Peace and rest  
    Are past for ever ;  
    Ye must all serve him,  
    Though see him can none ;  
    Where he cannot be spied  
    Look out for his coming ;  
    None shall escape from his thraldom !

[*Harshly.*

Hoho !    hoho !  
Hearken, he nears :  
The Nibelung's lord !

[*The pillar of cloud disappears in the background. Alberich's scolding voice is heard more and more faintly. Mime lies huddled up in pain. Wotan and Loge come down through a cleft in the rock.*

Loge                            Nibelheim here.  
    Through pale mists gleaming,  
    How bright yonder fiery sparks glimmer !

Mime                            Oh !    Oh !    Oh !

Wotan                            I hear loud groans.  
    Who lies on the ground ?

C

Mime writhes under the lashes he receives

See p. 40



Arthur Rackham 1910



## THE RHINEGOLD

Loge

Bends over Mime. Why all this whimpering noise ?

Mime

Ohé ! Ohé !

Oh ! Oh !

Loge

Hei, Mime ! Merry dwarf !  
Who beats and bullies thee so ?

Mime

Leave me in peace, pray.

Loge

So much is certain,  
And more still. Hark !

Help I promise thee, Mime !

[He raises him with difficulty.]

Mime

What help for me ?  
To do his bidding  
My brother can force me,  
For I am bound as his slave.

Loge

But, Mime, how has he  
Thus made thee his thrall ?

Mime

By evil arts  
Fashioned Alberich  
A yellow ring,  
From the Rhinegold forged,  
At whose mighty magic  
Trembling we marvel ;  
This spell puts in his power  
The Nibelung hosts of night.  
Happy we smiths  
Moulded and hammered,  
Making our women  
Trinkets to wear—  
Exquisite Nibelung toys—  
And lightly laughed at our toil.

## THE RHINEGOLD

The rogue now compels us  
To creep into caverns,  
For him alone  
To labour unthanked.  
Through the golden ring  
His greed can divine  
Where untouched treasure  
In hidden gorge gleams.  
We still must keep spying,  
Peering and delving :  
Must melt the booty,  
Which, molten, we forge  
Without pause or peace,  
To heap up higher his hoard.

**Loge** Just now, then, an idler  
Roused him to wrath?

**Mime** Poor Mime, ah !  
My lot was the hardest.  
I had to work,  
Forging a helmet,  
With strict instructions  
How to contrive it ;  
And well I marked  
The wondrous might  
Bestowed by the helm  
That from steel I wrought.  
Hence I had gladly  
Held it as mine,  
And, by its virtue  
Risen at last in revolt :  
Perchance, yes, perchance  
The master himself I had mastered,  
And, he in my power, had wrested  
The ring from him and used it

## THE RHINEGOLD

That he might serve me, the free man,  
[*Harshly.*  
As now I must serve him, a slave !

**Loge** And wherefore, wise one,  
Sped not the plan ?

**Mime** Ah ! though the helm I fashioned,  
The magic that lurks therein  
I foolishly failed to divine.

He who set the task  
And seized the fruits—  
From him I have learnt,  
Alas ! but too late !  
All the helmet's cunning craft.  
From my sight he vanished,  
But, viciously lashing,  
Swung his arm through unseen.

[*Howling and sobbing.*  
This, fool that I am,  
Was all my thanks !

[*He rubs his back. Wotan and Loge laugh.*

**Loge** Confess, our task  
*To Wotan.* Will call for skill.

**Wotan** Yet the foe will yield,  
Use thou but fraud.

**Mime** *Observes the Gods more attentively.* Who are you, ye strangers  
That ask all these questions ?

**Loge** Friends to thee,  
Who from their straits  
Will free all the Nibelung folk.

**Mime** Hark ! Have a care !  
*Shrinking back in fear when he hears Alberich returning.* Alberich comes ! [He runs to and fro in terror.

# THE RHINEGOLD

Wotan

We'll wait for him here.

[He sits down calmly on a stone. Alberich, who has taken the Tarnhelm from his head and hung it on his girdle, is brandishing his scourge and driving before him a band of Nibelungs from the gorges below. These are laden with gold and silver treasure, which, urged on by Alberich, they pile up so as to form a large heap.

Alberich

Hither ! Thither !

Héhé ! Hoho !

Lazy herd !

Haste and heap

Higher the hoard.

Up with thee there !

On with thee here !

Indolent dolts,

Down with the treasure !

Need ye my urging ?

Here with it all !

[He suddenly perceives Wotan and Loge.

Hey ! Who are they

That thus intrude ?

Mime ! Come here !

Rascally rogue !

Gossiping art

With the pilgrimage pair ?

Off, thou idler !

Back to thy bellows and beating !

[Lashing Mime, he chases him into the crowd of Nibelungs.

Hey ! to your labour !

Get ye all hence now !

Swing ye down swift !

From the virgin gorges

Get me the gold !

This whip will follow,

**Alberich drives in a band of Nibelungs laden with gold  
and silver treasure**

See p. 44



Arthur Rackham 1910



## THE RHINEGOLD

Delve ye not fast !  
That labour ye shirk not  
Mime be surety,  
Or surely the lash  
Of my whip will find him ;  
That where no one would guess  
I watch and I wander,  
None knows it better than he.  
Loitering still ?  
Lingered there ?

[He pulls the ring from his finger, kisses it  
and stretches it out in menace.

Fear ye and tremble,  
O fallen host,  
And obey  
The ring's dread lord !

[Howling and shrieking, the Nibelungs,  
among them Mime, scatter, and creep down  
into the clefts in all directions.

Alberich                    What seek ye here ?  
Looks long and distrustfully at Wotan and Loge.

Wotan                    From Nibelheim's gloomy realm  
Strange tidings have travelled up,  
Tales of wonders  
Worked here by Alberich ;  
And, greedy of marvels,  
Hither came we as guests.

Alberich                    By envy urged,  
Hither ye hie.  
Such doughty guests  
I do not mistake.

Loge                    Since I am known,  
Ignorant elf,  
Say then, with growling

## THE RHINEGOLD

Whom dost thou greet?  
In caverns cold  
Where once thou didst crouch,  
Who gave thee light  
And fire for thy comfort,  
Had Loge not smiled on thee?  
Or what hadst thou fashioned  
Had not I heated thy forge?  
I am thy kinsman  
And once was kind:  
Lukewarm, methinks, are thy thanks!

Alberich                    On light-born elves  
                                  Laughs now Loge,  
                                  The crafty rogue:  
Art thou, false one, their friend  
As my friend thou wert once,  
    Haha! I laugh!  
No harm from such need I fear.

Loge                        No cause then for thy distrust.

Alberich                    I can trust thy falsehood,  
                                  Not thy good faith!  
                                  [Taking up a defiant attitude.  
Yet I dare you all unflinching.

Loge                        'Tis thy might  
                                  That makes thee so bold;  
                                  Grimly great  
                                  Groweth thy power.

Alberich                    Seest thou the hoard  
                                  Yonder heaped  
                                  High by my host?

Loge                        A richer one never was seen.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich

A wretched pile  
Is this to-day, though.  
Boldly mounting,  
'Twill be bigger henceforward.

Wotan

But what is gained by the hoard  
In joyless Nibelheim,  
Where wealth finds nothing to buy?

Alberich

Treasure to gather  
And treasure to garner—  
Thereto Nibelheim serves.  
But with the hoard  
In the caverns upheaved  
Wonders all wonder surpassing  
Will I perform  
And win the whole world and its fairness.

Wotan

But, my friend, how compass that goal?

Alberich

Ye who live above and breathe  
The balmy, sweet airs,  
Love and laugh:  
A hand of gold  
Ere long, O ye Gods, will have gripped you!  
As I forswore love, even so  
No one alive  
But shall forswear it;  
By golden songs wooed,  
For gold alone will his greed be.  
On hills of delight  
Your home is, where gladness  
Softly lulls;  
The dark elves  
Ye despise, O deathless carousers!  
Beware!  
Beware!

## THE RHINEGOLD

For first your men  
Shall bow to my might ;  
Then your women fair  
Who my wooing spurned  
The dwarf will force to his will,  
Though frowned on by love.

[*Laughing savagely.*

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !  
Mark ye my word ?  
Beware !

Beware of the hosts of the night,  
When rise shall the Nibelung hoard  
From silent depths to the day !

Wotan  
*Furiously.*

Alberich

Loge  
*Stepping  
between them.*

Avaunt, impious fool !

What says he ?

Cease from thy folly !

[*To Alberich.*

Who would gaze not in wonder,  
Beholding Alberich's work ?  
If only thy skill can achieve  
Everything hope has promised,  
Almighty I needs must acclaim thee !

For moon and stars  
And the sun in his glory,  
Forced to do thee obeisance,  
Even they must bow down.  
But what would seem of most moment  
Is that they who serve thee,  
The Nibelung hosts,  
Bow and bear no hate.  
When thy hand held forth a ring  
Thy folk were stricken with fear.  
But in thy sleep  
A thief might slip up

## THE RHINEGOLD

And steal slyly the ring.  
Say, how wouldest thou save thyself then ?

Alberich

Most shrewd to himself seems Loge ;  
Others always  
Figure as fools.  
If I had to ask for  
Advice or aid  
On bitter terms,  
How happy the thief would be !  
This helmet that hides  
I schemed for myself,  
And chose for its smith  
Mime, finest of forgers.  
I am now able  
Swift to assume  
Any form that I fancy,  
Through the helm.  
No one sees me,  
Search as he will ;  
Though everywhere hidden,  
I always am there.  
So, fearing nothing,  
Even from thee I am safe,  
Most kind, careful of friends !

Loge

I have met  
Full many a marvel,  
But one so wondrous  
Have never known.  
Achievement so matchless  
Scarce can I credit.  
Were this possible, truly  
Thy might indeed were eternal.

Alberich

Dost thou believe  
I lie, as would Loge ?

## THE RHINEGOLD

Loge

Till it is proved  
I must suspect thy word.

Alberich

Puffed up with wisdom,  
The fool will explode soon:  
Of envy then die!  
Decide to what I shall change;  
In that form I shall stand.

Loge

Nay, choose for thyself,  
But strike me dumb with amaze.

Alberich

*Puts the  
Tarnhelm on  
his head.*

“Dragon dread,  
Wreathe thou and wriggle!”

[*He immediately disappears. An enormous  
serpent writhes on the floor in his place.  
It rears and threatens Wotan and Loge  
with its open jaws.*

Loge

*Pretends to be terrified.*      Ohé!

Alberich

*Laughing.*

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Loge

Ohé! Ohé!  
Horrible dragon,  
O swallow me not!  
Spare the life of poor Loge!

Wotan

Good, Alberich!  
Well done, rascal!  
How swiftly grew  
The dwarf to the dragon immense!

[*The dragon disappears and, in its stead,  
Alberich is again seen in his own shape.*

Alberich

He he! Ye scoffers,  
Are ye convinced?

“ Ohé ! Ohé !  
Horrible dragon,  
O swallow me not !  
Spare the life of poor Loge ! ”

See p. 50





## THE RHINEGOLD

Loge

*In a trembling voice.*

My trembling tells thee how truly.  
A giant snake  
Thou wert in a trice.  
Having beheld,  
I must credit the wonder.  
Couldest thou turn  
To something quite tiny  
As well as bigger?  
Methinks that way were best  
For slyly slipping from foes;  
That, though, I fear were too hard!

Alberich

For thee, yes;  
Thou art so dull!  
How small shall I be?

Loge

The most cramped of crannies must hold  
thee  
That hides the timorous toad.

Alberich

Nothing simpler!  
Look at me now!  
*[He puts the Tarnhelm on his head again.]*  
“Crooked toad,  
Creep and crawl there!”  
*[He vanishes. The Gods see a toad on the rocks creeping towards them.]*

Loge

*To Wotan.*

Quick and catch it!  
Capture the toad!

*[Wotan sets his foot on the toad. Loge makes a dash at its head and holds the Tarnhelm in his hand.]*

Alberich

*Is suddenly seen  
in his own shape writhing under Wotan's foot.*

Ohé! I'm caught!  
My curse upon them!

## THE RHINEGOLD

Loge

Hold him fast  
Till he is bound.

[*Loge binds his hands and feet with a rope.*  
Now swiftly up!  
Then he is ours.

[*Both seize hold of the prisoner, who struggles  
violently, and drag him towards the shaft  
by which they descended. They disappear  
mounting upwards.*





#### FOURTH SCENE

*The scene has changed as before, only in reverse order. Open space on mountain heights. The prospect is veiled by pale mist as at the end of the second scene. Wotan and Loge climb up out of the cavern, bringing with them Alberich bound.*

**Loge**                  Here, kinsman,  
                          Thou canst sit down !  
                          Friend, look round thee ;  
                          There lies the world  
That was thine for the winning, thou fool !  
                          What corner, say,  
Wilt give to me for my stall ?  
                          [He dances round Alberich, snapping his fingers.]

**Alberich**               Infamous robber !  
                          Thou knave ! Thou rogue !  
                          Loosen the rope,  
                          Set me at large,  
Or dear for this outrage shalt answer !

**Wotan**                 My captive art thou,  
                          Caught and in fetters.  
                          As thou hadst fain  
                          Subdued the world  
And all that the world containeth,  
Thou liest bound at my feet,  
And, coward, canst not deny it.  
                          A ransom alone  
                          Shall loose thee from bondage.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich

Ah, the dolt,  
The dreamer I was,  
To trust blindly  
The treacherous thief !  
Fearful revenge  
Shall follow this wrong !

Loge

Vain talk this of vengeance  
Before thy freedom is won.  
To a man in bonds  
No free man expiates outrage.  
If vengeance thou dreamest,  
Dream of the ransom  
First without further delay !

[He shows him the kind of ransom by snapping his fingers.

Alberich

Declare then your demands.

Wotan

The hoard and thy gleaming gold.

Alberich

Pack of unscrupulous thieves !

[Aside.

If I only can keep the ring,  
The hoard I can lightly let go,  
For anew I could win it  
And add to its worth  
By the powerful spell of the ring.  
If as warning it serves  
To make me more wise,  
The warning will not have been lost,  
Even though lost may be the gold.

Wotan

Wilt yield up the hoard ?

Alberich

Loosen my hand  
To summon it here.

[Loge frees his right hand.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich  
*Touches the ring with his lips and secretly murmurs the command.*

Behold the Nibelungs  
Hither are called ;  
I can hear them coming,  
Bid by their lord,  
With the hoard from the depths to the day.  
Now loosen these burdensome bonds.

Wotan

Nay, first in full thou must pay.

[*The Nibelungs come up out of the cleft laden with the objects of which the hoard is composed.*

Alberich

O bitter disgrace  
That my shrinking bondsmen  
Should see me captive and bound !

[*To the Nibelungs.*

Lay it down there,  
As ye are bid !  
In a heap  
Pile up the hoard.  
Must I aid, idlers ?  
No spying at me !  
Haste there ! Haste !  
Then get ye gone quickly.  
Hence to your work.  
Home to your gorges !  
Let the sluggards beware,  
For I follow hard at your heels !

[*He kisses the ring and holds it out with an air of command. As if struck with a blow, the Nibelungs press terrified and cowering towards the cleft, down which they hastily disappear.*

Alberich

The price is paid ;  
Let me depart !  
And that helm of mine  
Which Loge still holds,  
That also pray give me again !

## THE RHINEGOLD

**Loge**            The plunder must pay for the pardon.  
*Throwing the Tarnhelm on to the heap.*

**Alberich**            Accursed thief !  
                        But patience ! Calm !  
                        He who moulded the one  
                        Makes me another ;  
                        Still mine is the might  
                        That Mime obeys.  
                        Loath indeed  
                        Am I to leave  
My cunning defence to the foe !  
Nothing Alberich  
Owns at all now ;  
Unbind, ye tyrants, his bonds !

**Loge**            Ought I to free him ?  
*To Wotan.*            Art thou content ?

**Wotan**            A golden ring  
                        Girdles thy finger :  
                        Hearrest, elf ?  
That also belongs to the hoard.

**Alberich**            The ring ?  
*Horrified.*

**Wotan**            The ring must also  
                        Go to the ransom.

**Alberich**            My life—but the ring : not that !  
*Trembling.*

**Wotan**            The ring I covet ;  
*With greater violence.*            For thy life I care not at all.

**Alberich**            But if my life I ransom  
                        The ring I must also rescue ;

## THE RHINEGOLD

Hand and head,  
Eye and ear  
Are not mine more truly  
Than mine is the ruddy ring !

Wotan

The ring thou claimest as thine ?  
Impudent elf, thou art raving.  
Tell the truth ;  
Whence was gotten the gold  
To fashion the glittering gaud ?  
How could that be  
Thine which reft was,  
Thou rogue, from watery deeps ?  
To the Rhine's fair daughters  
Down and inquire  
If the gold  
Was as gift to thee given  
That thou didst thieve for the ring !

Alberich

Vile double-dealing !  
Shameless deceit !  
Wouldst thou, robber,  
Reproach in me  
The sin so sweet to thyself ?  
How fain thou hadst  
Bereft the Rhine of its gold,  
If it had been  
As easy to forge as to steal !  
How well for thee,  
Thou unctuous knave,  
That the Nibelung, stung  
By shameful defeat,  
And by fury driven,  
Was fired into winning the spell  
That now alluringly smiles !  
Shall I, bliss debarred,

## THE RHINEGOLD

Anguish-burdened  
Because of the  
Curse-laden deed,  
My ring as a toy  
Grant to princes for pleasure,  
My ban bringing blessing to thee?  
Have a care,  
Arrogant God!  
My sin was one  
Concerning myself alone:  
But against all that was,  
Is and shall be  
Thou wouldest wantonly sin,  
Eternal one, taking the ring.

Wotan

Yield the ring!  
Thy foolish talk  
Gives no title to that.

[He seizes Alberich and draws the ring from  
his finger by force.]

Alberich  
*With a fright-  
ful cry.*

Woe! Defeated! Undone!  
Of wretches the wretchedest slave!

Wotan  
*Contemplating  
the ring.*

I own what makes me supreme,  
The mightiest lord of all lords!

[He puts on the ring.]

Loge  
*To Wotan.*

Shall he go free?

Wotan

Loose his bonds.

Loge  
*Sets Alberich  
quite free.*

Slip away home,  
For no fetter binds thee!  
Fare forth, thou art free!

## THE RHINEGOLD

Alberich  
*Raising him  
self, with  
furious laughter.*

Am I now free,  
Free in truth?  
My freedom's first  
Greeting take, for it is thine!  
As a curse gave me the ring,  
My curse go with the ring!  
As its gold  
Gave measureless might,  
May now its magic  
Deal death evermore!  
No man shall gain  
Gladness therefrom;  
May ill-fortune befall him  
On whom it shines.  
Fretted by care  
Be he who shall hold it,  
And he who doth not,  
By envy be gnawed!  
All shall covet  
And crave its wealth,  
Yet none shall it profit  
Or pay when won.  
Those who guard it nothing shall gain,  
Yet shall murder go where they go.  
The coward, death-doomed,  
By fetters of fear shall be bound;  
His whole life long  
He shall languish to death—  
The ring's proud lord  
And its poorest slave—  
Till again I have  
In my hand the gold I was robbed of.  
So blesses  
The Nibelung  
The ring in bitter despair!  
Hold fast to it!

[*Laughing.*

## THE RHINEGOLD

Keep it with care ; [Grimly.  
From my curse none shall escape !

[He vanishes quickly through the cleft. The  
thick mist in the foreground gradually clears  
away.

**Loge** Hadst thou ears  
For his fond farewell ?

**Wotan** Grudge him not vent to his spleen !  
*Loft in contemplation of the ring.* [It keeps growing lighter.

**Loge** Fasolt and Fafner  
*Looking to the*  
*right.* Come from afar  
Bringing Freia again.

[Through the vanishing mist Donner, Froh,  
and Fricka appear, and hasten towards  
the foreground.

**Froh** The giants return.

**Donner** Be greeted, brother !

**Fricka** Dost bring joyful tidings ?  
*Anxiously to Wotan.*

**Loge** By fraud and by force  
*Pointing to*  
*the hoard.* We have prevailed :  
There Freia's ransom lies.

**Donner** From the giant's grasp  
Freed comes the fair one.

**Froh** How sweetly the air  
Fans us again !  
Balmy delights  
Steal soft through each sense !  
Sad, forlorn had our lot been,  
For ever severed from her

## THE RHINEGOLD

Who gives us youth everlasting,  
And bliss triumphant o'er pain.

[Fasolt and Fafner enter, leading Freia between them. Fricka hastens joyfully towards her sister. The foreground has become quite bright again, the light restoring to the aspect of the Gods its original freshness. The background, however, is still veiled by the mist so that the distant castle remains invisible.

Fricka

Sweetest of sisters !  
Lovely delight !  
Once more for mine have I won thee !

Fasolt

*Keeping her off.*

Hold ! Touch her not yet !  
Freia still is ours.  
On Riesenheim's  
Rampart of rock  
Resting we stayed.  
The pledge we held  
In our hands we used  
Loyally.  
With deep regret,  
I bring her back now  
In case ye brothers  
Can ransom her.

Wotan

Prepared lies the ransom ;  
Mete out the gold,  
Giving generous measure.

Fasolt

In truth it grieves me  
Greatly the woman to lose ;  
And that my heart may forget her  
Ye must heap the hoard,  
Pile it so high  
That it shall hide  
The blossom-sweet maid from mine eyes !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Wotan

Be Freia's form  
The gauge of the gold.

[*Freia is placed in the middle by the two giants, who then stick their staves into the ground in front of her so that her height and breadth is indicated.*

Fafner

Our staves give the measure  
Of Freia's form ;  
Thus high now heap ye the hoard.

Wotan

On with the work :  
Irksome I find it !

Loge

Help me, Froh !

Froh

I will end  
Freia's dishonour.

[*Loge and Froh heap up the treasure hastily between the staves.*

Fafner

Let the pile  
Less loosely be built ;  
Firm and close  
Pack ye the gauge !

[*He presses down the treasure with rude strength ; he bends down to look for gaps.*

I still can see through ;  
Come, fill up the crannies !

Loge

Hands off, rude fellow !  
Touch nothing here !

Fafner

Come here ! This gap must be closed !

Wotan

*Turning away  
angrily.*

Deep in my breast  
Burns the disgrace !

## THE RHINEGOLD

Fricka

See how in shame  
Beautiful Freia stands ;  
For release she asks,  
Dumb, with sorrowful eyes.  
Heartless man !  
The lovely one owes this to thee !

Fafner

Still more ! Pile on still more.

Donner

My patience fails ;  
Mad is the wrath  
Roused by this insolent rogue !  
Come hither, hound !  
Measure must thou ?  
Thy strength then measure with mine !

Fafner

Softly, Donner !  
Roar where it serves ;  
Thy roar is impotent here.

Donner

It will crush thee to thy cost, rogue.

*Lunging out at him.*

Wotan

Calm thyself !  
Methinks that Freia is hid.

Loge

The hoard is spent.

Fafner

Still shines to me Holda's hair.  
*Measures the hoard carefully*  
Yonder thing, too,  
Throw on the hoard !  
*with his eye, and looks to see if there are any crevices.*

Loge

Even the helm ?

Fafner

Make haste ! Here with it !

Wotan

Let it go also !

## THE RHINEGOLD

**Loge** At last we have finished.  
*Throws the*  
*Tarnhelm on the heap.* Have ye enough now?

**Fasolt** Freia, the fair,  
Is hidden for aye!  
The price has been paid.  
Ah, have I lost her?  
*[He goes up to the hoard and peers through it.]*

.

**Freia** Sadly shine  
Her eyes on me still,  
Like stars they beam  
Softly on me;  
Still through this chink  
I look on their light.  
*[Beside himself.]*

While her sweet eyes I behold thus,  
From the woman how can I part?

**Fafner** Hey! Come hither,  
And stop me this cranny!

**Loge** Greedy grumblers!  
Can ye not see  
The gold is all gone?

**Fafner** Not the whole, friend!  
On Wotan's finger  
Shines a golden ring still;  
Give that to close up the crevice!

**Wotan** What! Give my ring?

**Loge** Be ye counselled!  
The Rhine-Maidens  
Must have the gold;  
Wotan will give them what theirs is.

Fafner. "Hey ! Come hither,  
And stop me this cranny !"

See p. 64





## THE RHINEGOLD

Wotan                    What nonsense is this?  
                          The ring I won so hardly,  
                          Undismayed I hold and will keep.

Loge                    Broken then  
                          Must be the promise  
I gave the maidens who grieved.

Wotan                    By thy promise I am not bound ;  
                          As booty mine is the ring.

Fafner                Not so. The ring  
                          Must go with the ransom.

Wotan                Boldly ask what ye will :  
                          It shall be granted ;  
                          But not for all  
The world would I give you the ring.

Fasolt                All is off !  
*Furious, pulls Freia from behind the hoard.*  
                          The bargain stands :  
                          Fair Freia ours is for ever !

Freia                 Help me ! Help me !

Fricka                Heartless God,  
                          Grant it ! Give way !

Froh                  Keep not the gold back !

Donner                Give them the ring too !

Wotan                Let me alone !  
                          I hold to the ring.

[Fafner stops Fasolt as he is hastening off.  
All stand dismayed ; Wotan turns from  
them in anger. The stage has grown dark  
again. From a cleft in the rock on one  
side issues a bluish flame in which Erda  
suddenly becomes visible, rising so that her  
upper half is seen.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Erda  
*Stretching out a warning hand towards Wotan.*

Yield it, Wotan ! Yield it !  
Flee the ring's dread curse !  
Awful  
And utter disaster  
It will doom thee to.

Wotan

What woman woe thus foretells ?

Erda

All things that were I know,  
And things that are ;  
All things that shall be  
I foresee.  
The endless world's  
Ur-Wala,  
Erda, bids thee beware.  
Ere the earth was,  
Of my womb born  
Were daughters three ;  
And my knowledge  
Nightly the Norns tell to Wotan.  
Now summoned by  
Danger most dire,  
I myself come.  
Hearken ! Hearken ! Hearken !  
All things will end shortly ;  
And for the Gods  
Dark days are dawning !  
Be counselled ; keep not the ring !  
[Erda sinks slowly as far as the breast, while the bluish light grows fainter.]

Wotan

A mystic might  
Rang in thy words.  
Tarry, and tell me further.

Erda  
*Disappearing.*

Thou hast been warned ;  
Enough dost know ;  
Weigh my words with fear !  
[She vanishes completely.]

"Erda bids thee beware"

See p. 66





## THE RHINEGOLD

Wotan

If thus doomed to foreboding—  
I must detain thee  
Till all is answered!

[Wotan is about to follow Erda in order to detain her. Froh and Fricka throw themselves in his way and prevent him.

Fricka

What meanest thou, madman?

Froh

Go not, Wotan!  
Fear thou the warner,  
Heed her words well!

[Wotan gazes thoughtfully before him.

Bonner

Turning to the  
giants with a  
resolute air.

Hark, ye giants!  
Come back and wait still!  
The gold we give you also.

Fricka

Ah, dare I hope it?  
Deem ye Holda  
Worthy of such a price?

[All look at Wotan in suspense; he, rousing himself from deep thought, grasps his spear and swings it in token of having come to a bold decision.

Wotan

To me, Freia,  
For thou art free!  
Bought back for aye,  
Youth everlasting, return!  
Here, giants, take ye the ring!

[He throws the ring on the hoard. The giants release Freia; she hastens joyfully to the Gods, who care for her in turns for a space, with every manifestation of delight.

Fasolt

To Fafner.

Hold there, greedy one!  
Grant me my portion!  
Honest division  
Best for both is.

## THE RHINEGOLD

Fafner

More on the maid than the gold  
Thou wert set, love-sick fool,  
    And much against  
    Thy will the exchange was.  
    Sharing not, Freia  
Thou wouldest have wooed for thy bride ;  
    Sharing the gold,  
    It is but just  
That the most of it should be mine.

Fasolt

Infamous thief !  
Taunts ? And to me !

[To the Gods.

Come judge ye between us ;  
    Halve ye the hoard  
    As seems to you just !

[Wotan turns away in contempt.

Loge

Let him have the treasure ;  
Hold to what matters : the ring !

Fasolt

Back, brazen rascal !

Mine is the ring.

*Falls upon Fafner, who has mean- while been steadily packing up the treasure.* I lost for it Freia's smile. [He snatches hastily at the ring.

Fafner

Off with thy hands !

The ring is mine.

[There is a struggle. Fasolt tears the ring from Fafner.

Fasolt

I hold it. It is mine now !

Fafner

Hold fast, lest it should fall !

[Lunging out with his stave, he falls Fasolt to the ground with one blow ; from the dying man he then hastily tears the ring.

Fafner kills Fasolt

See p. 68





## THE RHINEGOLD

Now feast upon Freia's smile :  
No more shalt thou touch the ring !

*[He puts the ring into the sack and tranquilly continues to pack up the rest of the hoard. All the Gods stand horrified. A solemn silence.]*

**Wotan** Dread indeed  
I find is the curse's might.

**Loge** Unmatched, Wotan,  
Surely thy luck is !  
Great thy gain was  
In getting the ring ;  
But the gain of its loss  
Is gain greater still :  
There thy foemen, see,  
Slaughter thy foes  
For the gold thou hast let go.

**Wotan** Dark forebodings oppress me !  
Care and fear  
Fetter my soul ;  
Erda must teach me,  
Tell how to end them :  
To her I must descend.

**Fricka**  
*Caresing and coaxing him.*  
Why linger, Wotan ?  
Beckon they not,  
The stately walls,  
Waiting to offer  
Welcome kind to their lord ?

**Wotan**  
*Gloomily.*  
With wage accurst  
Paid was their cost.

**Donner**  
*Pointing to the background, which is still enveloped in mist.*  
Heavily mists  
Hang in the air ;  
Gloomy, wearisome  
Is their weight !  
The wan-visaged clouds

## THE RHINEGOLD

Charged with their storms I will gather,  
And sweep the blue heavens clean.

[*Donner mounts a high rock on the edge of the precipice, and swings his hammer; during what follows the mists gather round him.*

Hey da! Hey da! Hey do!

To me, O ye mists!

Ye vapours, to me!

Donner, your lord,

Summons his hosts!

[*He swings his hammer.*

To my hammer's swing

Hitherward sweep

Vapours and fogs!

Hovering mists!

Donner, your lord, summons his hosts!

Hey da! Hey da! Hey do!

[*Donner disappears completely in a thunder-cloud which has been growing darker and denser. The stroke of his hammer is heard falling heavily on the rock. A vivid flash of lightning comes from the cloud, followed by a loud clap of thunder. Froh has also disappeared in the cloud.*

**Donner**  
*Invisible.*

Brother, to me!

Show them the way by the bridge!

[*Suddenly the clouds roll away. Donner and Froh become visible. A rainbow of dazzling radiance stretches from their feet across the valley to the castle, which is gleaming in the light of the setting sun.*

**Froh**  
*Who, with outstretched hand, indicates to the Gods that the bridge is the way across the valley.*

Lo, light, yet securely,  
Leads the bridge to your halls.

Undaunted tread;  
Without danger the road!

[*Wotan and the other Gods stand speechless, lost in contemplation of the glorious sight.*

“ To my hammer’s swing  
Hitherward sweep  
Vapours and fogs !  
Hovering mists !  
Donner, your lord, summons his hosts ! ”

See p. 70





## THE RHINEGOLD

Wotan

Smiling at eve  
The sun's eye sparkles ;  
The castle ablaze  
Gleams fair in its glow.  
In the light of morning  
Glittering proudly,  
It stood masterless,  
Stately, tempting its lord.  
From dawn until sundown  
No little toil  
And fear have gone to the winning !  
From envious night,  
That now draws nigh  
Shelter it offers us.  
[Very firmly, as if struck by a great thought.  
So greet I my home,  
Safe from dismay and dread.  
[He turns solemnly to Fricka.  
Follow me, wife !  
In Valhall sojourn with me.

Fricka

What means the name Valhall ?  
I never seem to have heard it.

Wotan

That which, conquering fear,  
My fortitude brought  
Triumphant to birth—  
Let that explain the word !

[He takes Fricka's hand and walks slowly  
with her towards the bridge. Froh,  
Freia, and Donner follow.

Loge

*Remaining in  
the foreground  
and looking  
after the Gods.*

They are hastening on to their end,  
They who dream they are strong and  
enduring.  
I almost blush  
To be of their number ;

## THE RHINEGOLD

A fancy allures me  
And wakes in me longing  
Flaming fire to become :  
To waste and burn them  
Who tamed me of old,  
Rather than perish,  
Blind with the blind—  
Yes, even if godlike the Gods were—  
More wise were it, perhaps !

I must consider :  
The outcome who knows !

[With a show of carelessness he goes to join  
the Gods.

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens  
*From the  
valley.  
Invisible.*

Rhinegold !  
Rhinegold !  
Rhinegold pure !  
How radiant and clear  
Once thou didst shine on us !  
For thy lost glory  
We are grieving.  
Give us the gold !  
Give us the gold !  
O give us the Rhinegold again !

Wotan

*About to set his foot on the bridge, pauses and turns round.*

What wailing sound do I hear ?

Loge  
*Looks down into  
the valley.*

The Rhine's fair children,  
Bewailing their lost gold, weep.

Wotan

Accursèd nixies !  
Bid them tease us no more !

Loge  
*Calling down  
towards the  
valley.*

Ye in the water,  
Why wail ye to us ?  
List to Wotan's decree.

"The Rhine's fair children,  
Bewailing their lost gold, weep"

See p. 72





## THE RHINEGOLD

Ye have seen  
The last of the gold ;  
In the Gods' increase of splendour  
Bask and sun yourselves now.

[*The Gods laugh and cross the bridge during what follows.*

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Rhinegold !  
Rhinegold !  
Rhinegold pure !  
Oh, if in the waves  
There but shone still our treasure pure !  
Down in the deeps  
Can faith be found only :  
Mean and false  
Are all who revel above !

[*As the Gods cross the bridge to the castle  
the curtain falls.*







## THE VALKYRIE



## CHARACTERS

WOTAN	HUNDING
FRICKA	SIEGMUND
	SIEGLINDE

BRÜNNHILDE, Valkyrie

EIGHT OTHER VALKYRIES :

Gerhilde, Ortlinde, Waltraute,  
Schwertleite, Helmwige, Siegrune,  
Grimgerde, Rossweisse

## SCENES OF ACTION

ACT I. THE INTERIOR OF HUNDING'S DWELLING

ACT II. A WILD ROCKY MOUNTAIN

ACT III. ON THE TOP OF A ROCKY MOUNTAIN

(BRÜNNHILDE'S ROCK)





## THE FIRST ACT

*The interior of a dwelling-place built of wood, with the stem of a mighty ash-tree as its centre ; to the right, in the foreground, is the hearth, and behind this the store-room. At the back is the large entrance door ; to the left, far back, steps lead up to an inner chamber ; on the same side, nearer the front, stands a table with a broad bench behind it, fixed to the wall, and with stools in front. The stage remains empty for a space. Outside a storm is just subsiding. Siegmund opens the entrance door from without, and enters. With his hand on the latch he surveys the room. He seems overwhelmed with fatigue ; his dress and appearance indicate that he is in flight. He shuts the door behind him when he sees nobody, walks to the hearth with the final effort of an utterly exhausted man, and throws himself down on a bearskin rug.*

Siegmund

I rest on this hearth,  
Heedless who owns it.

[*He sinks back and remains stretched out motionless. Sieglinde enters from the inner chamber ; she thinks her husband has returned. Her grave look changes to one of surprise when she sees the stranger stretched out on the hearth.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Sieglinde  
*Still at the back.*

A stranger here !  
He must be questioned.  
*[Coming nearer.]*

What man came in  
And lies on the hearth ?  
*[As Siegmund does not move, she draws nearer still and looks at him.]*

Way-worn, weary  
He seems and spent.  
Faints he from weariness ?  
Can he be sick ?

*[She bends over him, and listens.]*  
He breathes still, his eyelids  
Are sealed but in slumber.

Worthy, valiant his mien,  
Though so worn he rests.

Siegmund  
*Suddenly raising his head.*

A drink ! A drink !

Sieglinde

I go to fetch it.

*[She takes a drinking-horn and hurries out.  
She returns with it full, and offers it to Siegmund.]*

Lo, the water  
Thy thirsting lips longed for :  
Water brought at thy wish !

*[Siegmund drinks, and hands her back the horn. As he signifies his thanks with a movement of the head, he gazes at her with growing interest.]*

Siegmund

Welcome the water !  
Quenched is my thirst.  
My weary load  
Lighter it makes ;  
New courage it gives ;  
Mine eyes that slept

## THE VALKYRIE

Re-open glad on the world.  
Who soothes and comforts me so ?

**Sieglinde**      This house and this wife  
                  Belong to Hunding.  
Stay thou here as his guest ;  
Tarry till he comes home.

**Siegmund**      Shelter he surely  
                  Will grant a worn,  
Wounded, weaponless stranger.

**Sieglinde**      Quick, show me ! Where are thy wounds ?  
*With anxious haste.*

**Siegmund**      My wounds are slight,  
*Shakes himself*    Scarce worthy remark ;  
*and springs up*    My limbs are well knit still,  
*briskly to a*      Whole and unharmed.  
*sitting posture.*   If my spear and shield had but been  
Half so strong as my arm is,  
I had vanquished the foe ;  
But in splinters were spear and shield.  
The horde of foemen  
Harassed me sore ;  
Through storm and strife  
Spent was my force ;  
But, faster than I from foemen,  
All my faintness has fled ;  
Darkness fell deep on my lids,  
But now the sun again laughs.

**Sieglinde**      *Goest to the storeroom, fills a*  
                  *horn with mead, and prof-* This healing and honeyed  
                  *fers it to Siegmund with Draught of mead*  
                  *friendly eagerness. Deign to accept from me.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

Set it first to thy lips.

[*Sieglinde sips from the horn and hands it back to him. Siegmund takes a long draught, regarding Sieglinde with increasing warmth. Still gazing, he takes the horn from his lips and lets it sink slowly, while his features express strong emotion. He sighs deeply, and lowers his gaze gloomily to the ground.*

Siegmund            Thou hast tended an ill-fated one !

*In a trembling voice.*    May all evil  
Be turned from thee !

[*He starts up quickly, and goes towards the back.*

I have been solaced  
By sweet repose :  
Onward now I must press.

Sieglinde            Who pursues thee so close at thy heels ?  
*Turning round quickly.*

Siegmund  
Stops.

Bad luck pursues me,  
Everywhere follows ;  
And where I linger  
Trouble still finds me :  
Be thou preserved from its touch !  
I must not gaze but go.

[*He strides hastily to the door and lifts the latch.*

Sieglinde  
*Forgetting herself, calls impetuously after him.*

Then tarry here !  
Misfortune thou canst not bring  
To those who abide with it !

Sieglinde. " This healing and honeyed  
Draught of mead  
Deign to accept from me."

Siegmund. " Set it first to thy lips."

See p. 79





## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

Wehwalt named I myself :  
Hunding here will I wait for.

*Deeply moved, remains standing ; he looks searchingly at Sieglinde, who, ashamed and sad, lowers her eyes. Returning, he leans against the hearth, his gaze fixed on Sieglinde, who continues silently embarrassed.*

Sieglinde *starts, listens and hears Hunding outside leading his horse to the stable. She hurries to the door and opens it. Hunding, armed with shield and spear, enters, but, perceiving Siegmund, pauses on the threshold. Hunding turns with a look of stern inquiry to Sieglinde.*

Sieglinde

*In answer to Hunding's look.* On the hearth  
Fainting I found  
One whom need drove here.

Hunding

Hast succoured him ?

Sieglinde

I gave him, as a guest,  
Welcome and a drink.

Siegmund  
*Regarding Hunding firmly and calmly.*

Drink she gave,  
Shelter too :  
Wouldst therefore chide the woman ?

Hunding

Sacred is my hearth :  
Sacred hold thou my house.

*[To Sieglinde, as he takes off his armour and hands it to her.]*

Set the meal for us men !

*[Sieglinde hangs up the arms on the stem of the ash-tree, fetches food and drink from the store-room and sets supper on the table. Involuntarily she turns her gaze on Siegmund again.]*

## THE VALKYRIE

Hunding  
Examining  
Siegmund's  
features keenly  
and with amaze,  
compares them  
with Sieglinde's.  
Aside.

How like to the woman !  
In his eye as well  
Gleams the guile of the serpent.

[He conceals his surprise, and turns with apparent unconcern to Siegmund.

Far, I trow,  
Must thou have fared ;  
The man who rests here  
Rode no horse :  
What toilsome journey  
Made thee so tired ?

Siegmund

Through wood and meadow,  
Thicket and moor,  
Chased by the storm  
And peril sore,  
**I ran by** I know not what road.  
I know as little  
What goal it led to,  
And I would gladly be told.

Hunding  
At table,  
inviting  
Siegmund  
to be seated.

'Tis Hunding owns  
The roof and room  
Which have harboured thee.  
If to the westward  
Thou wert to wend,  
In homesteads rich  
Thou wouldest find kinsmen  
Who guard the honour of Hunding.  
May I ask of my guest  
In return to tell me his name ?

[Siegmund, who has taken his seat at the table, looks thoughtfully before him. Sieglinde, who has placed herself beside Hunding and opposite Siegmund, gazes at him with evident sympathy and suspense.

Hunding discovers the likeness between Siegmund and  
Sieglinde

See p. 82



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## THE VALKYRIE

*Hunding  
Watching  
them both.*

If thou wilt not  
Trust it to me,  
To this woman tell thy secret :  
See, how eagerly she asks !

*Sieglinde  
Unembarrassed  
and interested.*

Gladly I'd know  
Who thou art.

*Siegmund  
Looks up and,  
gazing into  
her eyes, begins  
gravely.*

Not for me the name Friedmund ;  
Frohwalt fain were I called,  
But forced was I to be Wehwalt.  
Wölfe they called my father ;  
And I am one of twins :  
With a sister twin I was born.

Soon lost were  
Both mother and maid ;  
I hardly knew  
Her who gave me my life,  
Nor her with whom I was born.  
Warlike and strong was Wölfe,  
And never wanting for foes.

A-hunting oft  
Went the son with the father.  
One day we returned  
Outworn with the chase  
And found the wolf's nest robbed.  
The brave abode  
To ashes was burnt,  
Consumed to dust  
The flourishing oak,  
And dead was the mother,  
Dauntless but slain.  
No trace of the sister  
Was ever found :  
The Neidungs' heartless horde  
Had dealt us this bitter blow.

## THE VALKYRIE

My father fled,  
An outlaw with me ;  
And the youth  
Lived wild in the forest  
With Wölfe for many years.  
Sore beset and harried were they,  
But boldly battled the pair of wolves.

[*Turning to Hunding.*  
A Wölfin tells thee the tale,  
And a well-known Wölfin, I trow.

Hunding

Wondrous and wild the story  
Told by thee, valiant guest :  
Wehwalt—the Wölfin !  
I think that dark rumours anent  
This doughty pair have reached me,  
Though unknown Wölfe  
And Wölfin too.

Sieglinde

But tell me further, stranger :  
Where dwells thy father now ?

Siegmund

The Neidungs, starting anew,  
Hounded and hunted us down ;  
But slain by the wolves  
Fell many a hunter ;  
They fled through the wood,  
Chased by the game :  
Like chaff we scattered the foe.  
But trace of my father I lost ;  
Still his trail grew fainter  
The longer I followed ;  
In the wood a wolf-skin  
Was all I found ;  
There empty it lay :  
My father I had lost.—  
In the woods I could not stay ;

## THE VALKYRIE

My heart longed for men and for women.—

By all I met,  
No matter where,  
If friend I sought,  
Or woman wooed,

Still I was branded an outlaw;  
Ill-luck clung to me;  
Whatever I did right,  
Others counted it wrong;  
What seemed evil to me  
Won from others applause.

Grim feuds arose  
Wherever I went;  
Wrath met me  
At every turn;  
Longing for gladness,  
Woe was my lot:

I called myself Wehwalt therefore,  
For woe was all that was mine.

[*He looks at Sieglinde and marks her sympathetic gaze.*

Hunding

Thou wert shown no grace by the Norns  
That cast thy grievous lot;  
No one greets thee as guest  
With gladness in his home.

Sieglinde

Only cowards would fear  
A weaponless, lonely man!—  
Tell us, O guest,  
How in the strife  
At last thy weapon was lost!

Siegmund

A sorrowful child  
Cried for my help;  
Her kinsmen wanted  
To wed the maiden

## THE VALKYRIE

To one whom her heart did not choose.

To her defence

Gladly I hied;

The heartless horde

Met me in fight :

Before me foemen fell.

Fordone and dead lay the brothers.

The slain were embraced by the maid,

Her wrongs forgotten in grief.

She wept wild streams of woe,

And bathed the dead with her tears ;

For the loss of her brothers slain

Lamented the ill-fated bride.

Then the dead men's kinsmen

Came like a storm,

Vowing vengeance,

Frantic to fall on me ;

Foemen on all sides

Rose and assailed me.

But from the spot

Moved not the maid ;

My shield and spear

Sheltered her long,

Till spear and shield

Were hewn from my hand.

Standing weaponless, wounded,

I beheld the maid die :

I fled from the furious host—

She lay lifeless on the dead.

[*To Sieglinde with a look of fervent sorrow.*

The reason now I have told

Why none may know me as Friedmund.

[*He rises and walks to the hearth. Pale and deeply moved, Sieglinde looks on the ground.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Hunding  
Rises.

I know a wild-blooded breed ;  
What others revere  
It flouts unawed :  
All hate it, and I with the rest.  
When forth in haste I was summoned,  
Vengeance to seek  
For my kinsmen's blood,  
I came too late,  
And now return home  
To find the impious wretch  
In haven under my roof.—  
My house holds thee,  
Wölfling, to-day ;  
For the night thou art my guest.  
But wield to-morrow  
Thy trustiest weapon.  
I choose the day for the fight :  
Thy life shall pay for the dead.

[To Sieglinde, who steps between the two men with anxious gestures; harshly.

Forth from the hall !

Linger not here !

Prepare my draught for the night,  
And wait until I come.

[Sieglinde stands for a while undecided and thoughtful. Slowly and with hesitating steps she goes towards the store-room. There she pauses again, lost in thought, her face half averted. With quiet resolution she opens the cupboard, fills a drinking-horn, and shakes spices into it out of a box. She then turns her eyes on Siegmund, in order to meet his gaze, which he never removes from her. She perceives that Hunding is watching, and proceeds immediately to the bed-chamber. On the steps she turns once more, looks yearningly at Siegmund, and indicates with her eyes, persistently and with speaking plainness, a particular spot in the stem of the ash-tree. Hunding starts, and drives her off with a violent gesture. With a last look at Siegmund, she disappears into the bed-chamber, and shuts the door behind her.

## ALKYRIE THE VI

Hunding  
Taking his  
weapons from  
the tree-stem.

ns man should be armed.  
With weapc-morrow then, Wölffing.  
We meet to you hast heard ;  
My word th If well !

Ward thyse goes into the bed-chamber. *The shooting*  
[He goes into the bed-chamber. *The shooting*  
of the bolt is heard from within.

Siegmund alone. It has grown quitt Siegmund sinks down on to a couch  
from a dull fire on the hearth. *me time silently in great agitation.*  
beside the fire and broods for so

Siegmund

said when most wanted  
My father should find and wield.

A sword I less I entered  
Swordlman's house,  
My fo hostage here  
As a kin.  
I rema a fair  
I saw n and sweet,  
Woma liss and dread  
And b ne my heart.  
Consui for whom I long—  
The womai charm both wounds and  
She whose s—  
delight held by the man

In thrall is a weaponless foe.

Who mock ! Wälse !

Wälse, is thy sword ?—  
Whereusty sword  
The tr swung in battle,  
To be i my bosom should burst  
When fron hat fills my heart ?

The fury t he fire collapses. From the flame which  
[Taps up a bright light falls on the spot in  
the ash-tree's stem indicated by Sieglinde's  
tok, and on which the hilt of a sword is  
now plainly visible.

c

Sieglinde prepares Hunding's draught for the night

See p. 87



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## THE VALKYRIE

What can that be  
That shines so bright?  
What a ray streams  
From the ash-tree's stem!  
My eyes that saw not  
See the bright flash;  
Gay as laughter it gleams.  
How the radiant light  
Illumes my heart!  
Is it the look  
That lingered behind,  
Yonder clinging,  
When forth from the hall  
The lovely woman went?

[*From this point the fire gradually goes out.*

Darkly the shadows  
Covered my eyes,  
Till her shining glance  
Over me gleamed,  
Bringing me warmth and day.  
Gay and splendid  
The sun appeared,  
And blissfully circled  
With glory my head—  
Till by the hills it was hid.

[*The fire flickers up faintly again.*

But once more, ere it set,  
Bright it shone upon me,  
And the ancient ash-tree's stem  
Was lit by its golden glow.

The splendour passes,  
The light grows dim,  
Shadowy darkness  
Falls and enshrouds me;

## THE VALKYRIE

Deep in my bosom's fastness  
Glimmers still faintly the flame !

[*The fire goes out altogether. Total darkness. The door of the bed-chamber opens noiselessly. Sieglinde comes out in a white garment and advances softly but quickly towards the hearth.*

Sieglinde

Art asleep ?

Siegmund

*Joyfully surprised.*

Who steals this way ?

Sieglinde

*With stealthy  
haste.*

'Tis I : listen to me !

In sleep profound lies Hunding ;  
The draught that I mixed him I drugged.  
Use to good purpose the night !

Siegmund

Thou here, all is well !

*Ardently interrupting.*

Sieglinde

I have come to show thee a weapon ;

O couldst thou make it thine !

I then might call thee  
First among heroes,  
For only by him  
Can it be won.

O hearken : heed what I tell thee !

Here Hunding's kinsmen  
Sat in the hall,

Assembled to honour his wedding.

He took as his wife,  
Against her will,

One who was bartered by thieves.

Sad I sat there  
Through their carousing.

## THE VALKYRIE

A stranger entered the hall,  
An old and grey-coated man.  
So slouched was his hat  
That one of his eyes was hidden ;  
    But the other flashed  
    So that all feared it :  
    Overwhelming  
    Its menace they found ;  
    I alone  
    Suffered, when looked on,  
Sweet pain, sad delight,  
Sorrow and solace in one.  
    On me glancing,  
    He scowled at the others,  
As he swung a sword in his hands.  
    This sword he plunged  
    In the ash-tree's stem,  
To the hilt driving it home.  
The weapon he gains in guerdon  
Who draws it from its place.  
    Though sore they struggled,  
    Not one of the heroes  
Could win the weapon for his ;  
    Coming, going,  
    The guests essayed it,  
The strongest tugged at the steel ;  
Not an inch it stirred in the stem ;  
In silence yonder it cleaves.  
I knew then who he was  
That in sorrow greeted me.  
    I know too  
    Now for whom  
The sword was stuck in the tree.  
    O might I to-day  
    Find here the friend  
    Brought from afar

## THE VALKYRIE

By a woman's woe !  
Then all I have suffered  
In sorrow untold,  
All scorn and all shame  
In anger endured—  
All would avenged be,  
Sweetly atoned for—  
Regained fully  
The good I had lost ;  
For mine I should win  
All I had wept for,  
Could I but find the dear friend,  
And clasp him close in my arms !

Siegmund  
*Embracing*  
Sieglinde  
*with passionate*  
*ardour.*

Dear woman, that friend  
Holds thee at last,  
Both woman and sword are his.  
Here in my breast  
Burns hot the oath  
That welds us twain into one.  
For all that I sought  
I see now in thee,  
In thee all  
That once failed me I find.  
Thou wert despised,  
My portion was pain ;  
I was an outlaw,  
Dishonoured wert thou ;  
Sweet revenge beckons,  
Bids us be joyful ;  
I laugh  
From sheer fulness of joy,  
Holding thee, love, in my arms thus,  
Feeling the beat of thy heart !

[*The outer door swings open.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Sieglinde  
*With a start  
of alarm, tears  
herself away.*

Siegmund  
*In soft ecstasy.*

Ha, who went? Who entered there?

[*The door remains open. Outside, a glorious  
spring night. The full moon shines in,  
throwing its bright light on the pair, so  
that they can suddenly see one another  
quite plainly.*

No one went—  
But one has come:  
Laughing the spring  
Enters the hall!

[*He draws Sieglinde with tender force on  
to the couch, so that she sits beside him.  
The moon shines more and more brightly.*

Winter storms have yielded  
To May's sweet moon,  
And mild and radiant  
Sparkles the spring.  
On balmy breezes  
Light and lovely,  
Weaving wonders,  
Soft she sways.  
Through field and forest  
She is breathing;  
Wide and open  
Laughs her eye;  
When blithe the birds are singing  
Sounds her voice;  
Fragrant odours  
She exhales;  
From her warm blood blossom flowers  
Welcome and joyous.  
Shoot and bud,  
They wax by her aid.  
With tender weapons armed,  
She conquers the world.  
Winter and storm yield  
To the strong attack.

## THE VALKYRIE

No wonder that, beaten boldly,  
At last the door should have opened,  
    Which, stubborn and stiff,  
Was keeping her out.  
    To find her sister  
    Hither she came ;  
By love has spring been allured ;  
    Within our bosoms  
    Buried she lay ;  
Now glad she laughs to the light.  
    The bride who is sister  
    Is freed by the brother ;  
In ruin lies  
    What held them apart.  
Loud rejoicing,  
    They meet and greet ;  
Lo ! Love is mated with spring !

### Sieglinde

Thou art the spring  
    That I used to pine for,  
When pinched by the winter frost ;  
    My heart hailed thee friend  
    With bliss and with fear,  
When thy first glance fell on me sweetly  
    All I had seen appeared strange ;  
Friendless were my surroundings ;  
I never seemed to have known  
    Any one who came nigh.  
    Thee, however,  
    Straightway I knew,  
    And I saw thou wert mine  
    When I beheld thee :  
    What I hid in my heart,  
    All I am,  
    Clear as the day  
    Dawned to my sight

## THE VALKYRIE

Like tones to the ear  
Echoing back,  
When, upon my frosty desert,  
My eyes first beheld a friend.

[*She hangs enraptured on his neck, and looks him close in the face.*

Siegmund  
*Transported.*

O rapture most blissful !  
Woman most blest !

Sieglinde  
*Close to his eyes.*

O let me, closer  
And closer clinging,  
Discern more clearly  
The sacred light  
That from thine eyes  
And face shines forth,  
And so sweetly sways every sense !

Siegmund

The May-moon's light  
Falls on thy face  
Framed by masses  
Of waving hair.  
What snared my heart  
'Tis easy to guess :  
My gaze on loveliness feasts.

Sieglinde  
*Pushing the hair back from his brow, regards him with astonishment.*

How broad and open  
Is thy brow !  
Blue-branching the veins  
In thy temples entwine.  
I hardly can endure  
My burden of bliss.—  
Of something I am reminded :—  
The man I first saw to-day  
Already I have seen !

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

A dream of love  
I too recall ;  
I saw thee there  
And yearned for thee sore !

Sieglinde

The stream has shown me  
My imaged face—  
Again I see it before me ;  
As in the pool it arose  
It is reflected by thee.

Siegmund

Thine is the face  
I hid in my heart.

Sieglinde

*Quickly averting  
her gaze.*

O hush ! That voice !  
O let me listen !  
These tones as a child  
Surely I heard—  
But no ! I heard the sound lately,  
When, calling in the wood,  
My voice re-echoing rang.

Siegmund

To sweet and melodious  
Music I listen !

Sieglinde

*Gazing into  
his eyes again.*

And ere now thy glowing  
Eye have I seen :  
The old man whose glance  
Solaced my grief,  
When he greeted me had that eye—  
I knew him  
Because of his eye,  
And almost addressed him as father.

Art thou Wehwalt in truth ?

[After a pause.]

Siegmund

If dear to thee,  
Wehwalt no more ;  
My sway is o'er bliss not sorrow !

## THE VALKYRIE

Sieglinde      And Friedmund does not  
                  Fit with thy fortunes.

Siegmund      Choose thou the name  
                  Thou wouldst have me be known by :  
                  Thy choice will also be mine !

Sieglinde      The name of thy father was Wölfe ?

Siegmund      A wolf to the fearful foxes !  
                  But he whose eye  
                  Shone with the brightness  
                  Which, fairest one, shines in thine own,  
                  Was named—Wälse of old.

Sieglinde      Was Wälse thy father,  
                  Beside herself.      And art thou a Wälsung ?—  
                  Stuck was for thee  
                  His sword in the stem ?—  
                  Then let my love call thee  
                  What it has found thee ;  
                  Siegmund  
                  Shall be thy name.

Siegmund      Siegmund call me  
                  Springs up.      For Siegmund am I !  
                  Be witness this sword  
                  I grasp without shrinking !  
                  That I should find it  
                  In sorest need  
                  Wälse foretold.  
                  I grasp it now !  
                  Love the most pure  
                  In utmost need,  
                  Passionate love,  
                  Consuming desire  
                  Burning bright in my breast,  
                  Drive to deeds and death !

## THE VALKYRIE

Nothung ! Nothung !  
That, sword, is thy name.  
Nothung ! Nothung !  
Conquering steel !  
Show me thy sharp  
And sundering tooth :  
Come forth from thy scabbard to me !

[He draws the sword with a violent effort  
from the stem of the tree and shows it to  
the amazed and enraptured Sieglinde.

Siegmund the Wälsung  
Thou dost see !  
As bride-gift  
He brings thee this sword ;  
With this he frees  
The woman most blest ;  
He bears thee  
From the house of his foe.  
Far from here  
Follow thou him :  
Forth to the laughing  
House of the spring ;  
Thy shield be Nothung, the sword,  
When Siegmund is captive to love !

[He throws his arm round her so as to draw  
her forth with him.

Sieglinde  
*Delirious with  
excitement,  
tears herself  
away and  
stands before  
him.*

Art thou Siegmund  
Standing before me,  
Sieglinde am I  
Who longed for thee ;  
Thy own twin-sister  
As well as the sword thou hast  
won !

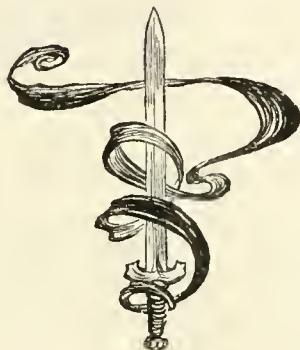
[She throws herself on his breast.

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

Bride and sister  
Be to thy brother—  
So Wälsungs shall flourish for aye!

[He draws her to him with fervent passion.  
The curtain falls quickly.





## THE SECOND ACT

*A wild mountainous spot. In the background a gorge rises from below to a high ridge of rocks, from which the ground slopes down again towards the front. Wotan, in full armour, carrying his spear. Before him Brünnhilde as a Valkyrie, also fully armed.*

Wotan

Go bridle thy steed,  
Valorous maid !  
Bitter strife  
Soon will break forth ;  
Brünnhilde, storm to the fray  
And cause the Wälsung to win !  
Hunding choose for himself  
Where to bide :  
No place in Walhall has he.  
So up and to horse !  
Haste to the field !

Brünnhilde  
*Ascends the  
height on the  
right, shouting  
and springing  
from rock  
to rock.*

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Heiaha ! Heiaha !  
Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Heiaha ! Heiaha !  
Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !

“ Siegmund the Wälzung  
Thou dost see !  
As bride-gift  
He brings thee this sword ”

See p. 98





## THE VALKYRIE

**Heiaha ! Hojoho !**

[She pauses on a high peak, looks down into  
the gorge and calls back to Wotan.

I warn thee, Father,

See to thyself ;

Stern the strife

That is in store :

Here comes Fricka, thy wife,

Drawn hither in her car by her rams,

Swinging the golden

Scourge in her hand !

The wretched beasts

Are groaning with fear ;

And how the wheels rattle !

Hot she hastes to the fray.

Such strife as this

No strife is for me,

Though I love boldly waged

Strife 'twixt men.

The battle alone thou must brave ;

I go ; thou art left in the lurch !

**Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !**

**Heiaha ! Heiaha !**

**Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !**

**Heiaha ! Heiaha !**

**Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !**

**Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !**

**Heiaha ! Ha !**

[She disappears behind the mountain peak at  
the side. Fricka, in a car drawn by a  
pair of rams, has driven up the gorge to the  
mountain ridge, where she suddenly stops,  
alights and strides angrily towards Wotan  
in the foreground.

**Wotan**

*Aside, when he  
sees Fricka  
approaching.*

**The usual storm !**

**The usual strife !**

**But I must act with firmness.**

## THE VALKYRIE

**Fricka** All alone among the hills  
*Moderating her pace as she approaches, and confronting Wotan with dignity.* I seek thee, where thou dost hide  
Fearing the eyes  
Of thy wife,  
That help in need thou may'st promise.

**Wotan** Let Fricka tell  
Her trouble in full.

**Fricka** I have heard Hunding's cry,  
For vengeance calling on me;  
As wedlock's guardian  
I gave ear:  
My word passed  
To punish the deed  
Of this impious pair  
Who boldly wrought him the wrong.

**Wotan** Have this pair then  
Done such harm,  
Whom spring united in love?  
'Twas love's sweet magic  
That lured them on;  
None pays for love's might to me.

**Fricka** How dull and how deaf thou wouldest seem!  
As though thou wert not aware  
That it is wedlock's  
Holy oath  
Profaned so rudely I grieve for.

**Wotan** Unholy  
Hold I the bond  
That binds unloving hearts;  
Nor must thou  
Imagine that I

f

Brünnhilde

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## THE VALKYRIE

Will restrain by force  
What transcends thy power ;  
For where bold natures are stirring  
I urge them frankly to strife.

Fricka

Deeming thus laudable  
Wedlock's breach,  
Pray babble more nonsense  
And call it holy  
That shame should blossom forth  
From bond of a twin-born pair !  
I shudder at heart,  
My brain reels and whirls.  
Sister embraced  
As bride by the brother—  
Who has ever heard  
Of brother and sister as lovers ?

Wotan

Thou hearest it now !  
Be taught by this  
That a thing may be  
Which has never befallen before.  
That those two are lovers  
Thou must admit ;  
So take advice and be wise !  
Thy blessing surely  
Will bring to thee gladness,  
If thou wilt, laughing on love,  
Bless Siegmund and Sieglinde's bond.

Fricka

*With a  
burst of deep  
indignation.*

Then nothing to thee  
Are the gods everlasting  
Since the wild Wälsungs  
Won thee for father ?  
I speak plainly—  
Is that thy thought ?

## THE VALKYRIE

The holy and high  
Immortals are worthless ;  
And all that once  
Was esteemed is thrown over ;  
The bonds thou didst bind  
By thyself now are broken ;  
Heaven's hold  
Is loosed with a laugh,  
That this twin-born pair, unimpeded,  
The fruit of thy lawless love,  
May in wantonness flourish and rule !  
But why wail over  
Wedlock and vows,  
Since by thee the first they are scorned !  
The faithful wife  
Betrayed at each turn,  
Lustfully longing  
Wander thy glances ;  
Thine eyes scan  
Each hollow and height  
As thy fickle fancy allures thee,  
While grief is gnawing my heart.  
Heavy of soul  
I had to endure it,  
When to the fight  
With the graceless maidens  
Born out of wedlock,  
Forth thou hast fared ;  
**For**, thy wife still holding in awe,  
Thou didst give her as maids  
The Valkyrie band  
To obedience bound,  
Even Brünnhilde, bride of thy Wish.  
But now that new names  
Afford thee new pleasure,  
And Wälse, wolfish, in

Fricka approaches in anger

See p. 101



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## THE VALKYRIE

Forests has wandered ;  
Now that to bottomless  
Shame thou hast stooped,  
And a pair of mortals  
Hast vilely begotten—  
Now thy wife at the feet  
Of whelps of a wolf thou dost fling !  
Come finish thy work !  
Fill the cup full !  
Mock and trample now the betrayed one !

**Wotan**  
*Quietly.*

Thou couldst not learn,  
Though I might teach thee ;  
To thee there is nothing plain  
Till day has dawned on the deed,  
Wonted things  
Thou alone canst conceive,  
Whereas my spirit broods  
On things not yet brought forth.  
Listen, woman !  
Some one we need,  
A hero gods have not shielded,  
And who is not bound by their law.  
So alone  
Were he fit for the deed  
Which no god can accomplish,  
Yet which must be done for the gods.

**Fricka**

With sayings dark  
Thou fain wouldest deceive me !  
What deed by hero  
Could be accomplished  
That was beyond the strength of the gods,  
By whose grace alone he is strong ?

**Wotan**

Then his own heart's courage  
Counts not at all ?

## THE VALKYRIE

Fricka

Who breathed their souls into men?  
Who opened their eyes, that they see?  
Behind thy shield  
Strong they appear;  
With thee to goad them,  
Upward they strive;  
Those men that thou praisest,  
'Tis thou who spurrest them on.  
With falsehoods fresh  
Thou wouldest fain delude me,  
With new devices  
Thou wouldest evade me;  
Thou shalt not shelter  
The Wälsung from me;  
He lives only through thee,  
And is bold through thee alone.

Wotan

*With emotion.*

He grew unaided  
In grievous distress;  
My shield sheltered him not.

Fricka

Then shield him not to-day;  
Take back the sword  
That thou hast bestowed.

Wotan

The sword?

Fricka

Yes, the sword,  
The magic sword  
Sudden and strong  
That thou gavest to thy son.

Wotan

*Unsteadily.*

Nay, Siegmund won it  
Himself in his need.

[*From here Wotan's whole attitude expresses an ever-deepening uneasiness and gloom.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Fricka  
*Continuing passionately.*

Both conquering sword  
And the need came from thee.  
Wouldst thou deceive me  
Who, day and night,  
At thy heels follow close ?  
For him thou didst strike  
The sword in the stem ;  
Thou didst promise him  
The peerless blade.  
Canst thou deny  
That thy cunning it was  
Which led him where it lay hid ?

[*Wotan makes a wrathful gesture. Fricka goes on more and more confidently as she sees the impression produced on him.*

The Gods  
Do not battle with bondsmen ;  
The free but punish transgressors.  
Against thee, my peer,  
Have I waged war,  
But Siegmund is mine as my slave.

[*Another violent gesture from Wotan, who then seems to succumb to the feeling of his own powerlessness.*

Shall thy eternal  
Consort obey one  
Who calls thee master  
And bows as thy slave ?  
What ! Shall I be  
Despised by the basest,  
To the lawless a spur,  
A scoff to the free ?  
My husband cannot desire me,  
A goddess, to suffer such shame !

Wotan  
*Gloomily.*

What then wouldest thou ?

## THE VALKYRIE

**Fricka**                   Shield not the Wälsung.  
**Wotan**  
*In a muffled voice.*     His way let him go.  
**Fricka**                   Thou wilt grant him no aid,  
                             When to arms the avenger calls?  
**Wotan**                   I shield him no more.  
**Fricka**                   Seek not to trick me ;  
                             Look in my eyes !  
                             The Valkyrie turn from him too.  
**Wotan**                   The Valkyrie free shall choose.  
**Fricka**                   Not so ; she but acts  
                             To accomplish thy will ;  
                             Give order that Siegmund die.  
**Wotan**  
*After a violent internal struggle.*     Nay, slay him I cannot,  
                             He found my sword !  
**Fricka**                   Remove thou the magic,  
                             And shatter the blade :  
                             Swordless let him be found.  
**Brünnhilde**  
*Is heard calling from the heights.*     Heiaha !    Heiaha !  
                             Hojotoho !  
                             Heiaha !    Heiaha !  
                             Heiohotojo !    Hotojoha !  
**Fricka**                   Thy valorous maiden comes ;  
                             Shouting, hither she rides.  
**Wotan**                   For Siegmund I called her to horse.  
[*Brünnhilde appears with her horse on the rocky path to the right. When she sees Fricka she stops abruptly and, during the following, slowly and silently leads her horse down the path. She then puts it in a cave.*]

## THE VALKYRIE

Fricka

By her shield to-day  
Be guarded the honour  
Of thy eternal spouse !  
Derided by men,  
Shorn of our power,  
Perish and pass would the Gods  
If thy valiant maid  
Avenged not to-day  
My sacred and sovereign right.  
The Wälsung falls for my honour.  
Does Wotan now pledge me his oath ?

Wotan

Throwing himself  
on to a rocky seat  
in terrible dejection.

Take the oath !

[Fricka strides towards the back, where she  
meets Brünnhilde and halts for a moment  
before her.

Fricka

Warfather  
Waits for thee ;  
He will instruct thee  
How the lot is decreed !

[She drives off quickly.

Brünnhilde

Comes forward  
anxious and won-  
dering to Wotan,  
who, leaning back  
on his rocky seat,  
is brooding gloomily.

Ill closed  
The fight, I fear ;  
Fricka laughs at the outcome !  
Father, what news  
Hast thou to tell me ?  
Sad thou seemest and troubled !

Wotan

Dropping his  
arm helplessly  
and sinking his head on his breast.

By self-forged fetters  
I am bound,

I, least free of all living !

Brünnhilde

I know thee not thus :  
What gnaws at thy heart ?

## THE VALKYRIE

**Wotan**  
*His expression  
and gestures  
working up,  
from this point,  
to a fearful  
outburst.*

O sacrilege vile !  
O grievous affront !  
Gods' despair !  
Gods' despair !  
Infinite wrath !  
Woe without end !

Most sorrowful I of all living !

**Brünnhilde**  
*Alarmed, throws  
her shield, spear  
and helmet from  
her and kneels  
with anxious  
affection at  
his feet.*

Father ! Father !  
Tell me what ails thee ?  
With dismay thou art filling thy child !  
Confide in me  
For I am true ;  
See, Brünnhilde begs it !

[She lays her head and hands with tender  
anxiety on his knees and breast.

**Wotan**  
*Looks long in  
her eyes, then  
strokes her hair with involuntary tenderness. As if coming  
out of a deep reverie, he at last begins, very softly.*

What if, when uttered,  
Weaker it made  
The controlling might of my will ?

**Brünnhilde**  
*Very softly.*

To Wotan's will thou speakest  
When thou speakest to me ?  
What am I  
If I am not thy will ?

**Wotan**  
*Very softly.*

What never to any was spoken  
Shall be unspoken now and for ever.  
Myself I speak to,  
Speaking to thee.

[In a low, muffled voice.

When young love grew  
A waning delight,  
'Twas power my spirit craved ;  
By rash and wild  
Desires driven on,

C

Brünnhilde slowly and silently leads her horse down the  
path to the cave

See p. 108





## THE VALKYRIE

I won myself the world.  
Unknown to me  
Dishonest my acts were ;  
Bargains I made  
Wherein hid mishap,  
Craftily lured on by Loge,  
Who straightway disappeared.  
Yet I could not leave  
Love altogether ;  
When grown mighty still I desired it.  
The child of night,  
The craven Nibelung,  
Alberich, broke from its bond.  
All love he forswore,  
And procured by the curse  
The gleaming gold of the Rhine,  
And with it measureless might.  
The ring that he wrought  
I stole by my cunning,  
But I restored it not  
To the Rhine ;  
It paid the price  
Of Walhall's towers :  
The home the giants had built me,  
From which I commanded the world.  
She who knows all  
That ever was,  
Erda, the holy,  
All-knowing Wala,  
Warned me touching the ring :  
Prophesied doom everlasting.  
Of this doom I was fain  
To hear further,  
But silent she vanished from sight.  
Then my gladness of heart was gone,  
The god's one desire was to know.

## THE VALKYRIE

To the womb of the earth  
Downward then I went :  
By love's sweet magic  
Vanquished the Wala,  
Troubled her wisdom proud,  
And compelled her tongue to speak.  
Tidings by her I was told ;  
And with her I left a fair pledge :  
The world's wisest of women  
Bore me, Brünnhilde, thee.

With eight sisters  
Fostered wert thou,  
That ye Valkyries  
Might avert the doom  
Which the Wala's  
Dread words foretold :  
The gods' ignominious ending.  
That foes might find us  
Strong for the strife,  
Heroes I got ye to gather.  
The beings who served us  
As slaves aforetime,  
The men whose courage  
Aforetime we curbed :  
Who through treacherous bonds  
And devious dealings  
Were bound to the gods  
In blindfold obedience—  
To kindle these men  
To strife was your duty,  
To drive them on  
To savage war,  
That hosts of dauntless heroes  
Might gather in Walhall's hall.

Brünnhilde  
And well filled surely thy halls were ;  
Many a one I have brought.

“Father ! Father !  
Tell me what ails thee ?  
With dismay thou art filling thy child !”

See p. 110





## THE VALKYRIE

We never were idle,  
So why shouldst thou fear?

Wotan

*His voice  
muffled again.*

Another ill—  
Mark what I say—  
Was by the Wala foretold!  
Through Alberich's hosts  
Doom may befall us;  
A furious grudge  
Alberich bears me;  
But now that my heroes  
Make victory certain  
I defy the hosts of the night.  
Only if he won  
The ring again from me,  
Walhall were forfeit for ever.  
Used by him alone  
Who love forswore  
Could the runes of the ring  
Bring doom  
To the mighty gods,  
And shame without end.  
My heroes' valour  
He would pervert,  
Would stir to strife  
The bold ones themselves,  
And with their strength  
Wage war upon me.  
So, alarmed, I resolved  
To wrest the ring from the foeman.

[In a low voice.]

I once paid Fafner,  
One of the giants,  
With gold accurst  
For work achieved.

Fafner guards now the hoard

## THE VALKYRIE

For which his own brother he slew.  
The ring I must needs recover  
With which his work I rewarded.

But I cannot strike one  
By treaties protected ;  
Vanquished by him  
My valour would fail.  
These are the bonds  
That bind my power ;  
**I**, who by treaties am lord,  
To my treaties also am slave.

But what I dare not  
One man may dare—  
A hero never  
Helped by my favour,  
To me unknown  
And granted no grace,  
Unaware,  
Bidden by none,  
Constrained thereto  
By his own distress—  
He could achieve  
What I must not do :  
The deed I never urged,  
Though it was all my desire.  
But, alas ! how to find  
One to fight me, the god,  
For my good—  
Most friendly of foes !  
How fashion the free one  
By me unshielded,  
In his proud defiance  
Most precious to me ?  
How get me the other  
Who, not through me,  
But of himself

## THE VALKYRIE

Will perform my will ?  
O woe of the gods !  
Horrible shame !  
Soul-sick am I  
Of seeing myself  
In all I ever created.  
The other whom I so long for,  
That other I never find.  
The free by themselves must be fashioned,  
All that I fashion are slaves !

Brünnhilde

But the Wälsung, Siegmund,  
Works for himself.

Wotan

Wild I roamed  
In the woodland with him,  
Ever against the gods  
Goading him to rebel.

*[Slowly and bitterly.]*

Now, when the gods seek vengeance,  
Shield he has none but the sword

Given to him  
By the grace of a god.  
Why did I try  
To trick myself vainly ?  
How easily Fricka  
Found out the fraud !  
She read my inmost  
Heart to my shame.

I must bend my will to her wishes.

Brünnhilde

Of victory wouldest Siegmund deprive ?

Wotan

I have handled Alberich's ring,  
Loth to let the gold go.  
The curse that I fled  
Is following me :

## THE VALKYRIE

I must always lose what I love most,  
Slay what my heart holds dearest,  
    Basely betray  
    All those who trust.

[*His gestures, at first those of terrible grief,  
end by expressing despair.*

Pale then and pass  
Glory and pomp,  
Godhead's resplendent,  
Glittering shame !  
In ruins fall  
The fabric I built !  
Ended is my work ;  
I wait but one thing more :

The downfall—  
The downfall !

[*He pauses thoughtfully.*

And for the downfall  
Schemes Alberich !  
Now I see  
The sense hidden  
In the strange, wild words of the Wala :  
“ When the gloomy foe of love  
Gets a son in his wrath,  
    The high gods' doom  
    Shall be at hand ! ”  
Not long ago  
A rumour I heard  
That the dwarf had won a woman,  
By gold gaining her grace.

A woman bears  
Hate's bitter fruit ;  
The child of spite  
Grows in her womb ;  
This marvel befell  
The man who loved not ;

## THE VALKYRIE

But I, the loving wooer,  
Have never begotten the free.

[*Rising in bitter wrath.*

Accept thou my blessing,  
Nibelung son !

I leave to thee

What I loathe with deep loathing :  
The hollow pomp of the gods.  
Consume it with envious greed !

Brünnhilde  
*Alarmed.*

O say ! tell me  
What task is thy child's ?

Wotan  
*Bitterly.*

Fight, faithful to Fricka ;  
Wedlock and vows defend !  
What she desires  
Is also my choice,  
For what does my own will profit,  
Since it cannot fashion a free one ?  
For Fricka's slaves  
Do battle henceforth !

Brünnhilde

Ah repent,  
And take back thy word !  
Thou lovest,  
And fain, I know,  
Wouldst have me shelter the Wälsung.

Wotan

Siegmund thou shalt vanquish,  
And fight so that Hunding prevails.  
Ward thyself well  
And doughtily do,  
Bring all thy boldness  
To bear on the field ;  
A strong sword  
Swings Siegmund ;  
Undismayed he will fight !

## THE VALKYRIE

Brünnhilde

He whom thou still  
Hast taught me to love,  
He whose courage high  
To thy heart was so precious—  
I will shield him in spite of  
Thy wavering word !

Wotan

Ha, daring one !  
Floutest thou me ?  
Who art thou—who but the choiceless,  
Blind slave of my will ?  
I have sunk so low  
By showing my mind,  
That the creature made by me  
Holds me in scorn.  
Dost thou, child, know my wrath ?  
If ever its awful  
Lightning struck thee  
Then quail wouldest thou indeed !  
Within my bosom  
Burns enough rage  
To lay waste  
In dread ruin a world  
That once wore nothing but smiles.  
Woe to him whom it strikes !  
Dear the price he would pay !  
So be advised,  
Call it not forth  
But carry out my commands.  
Cut down Siegmund !  
That is the Valkyrie's task.

[*He storms away and disappears among the rocks to the left.*

Brünnhilde stands for a long time dazed and alarmed  
See p. 119



Arthur Rackham 1910



## THE VALKYRIE

**Brünnhilde**  
Stands for a  
long time  
dazed and  
alarmed.

**Warfather**  
Oft have I seen  
**Enraged, but never once like this !**  
[She stoops down sadly, takes up her armour  
and puts it on again.]

How heavy  
My armour feels !  
And it felt so light  
When gladly I fought !  
I fight afraid.  
**Evil is my cause !**

[She gazes thoughtfully before her.]

Woe ! My Wälsung !  
With sorrow sore  
**Must the faithful one falsely forsake thee !**  
[She turns slowly towards the back.]

On reaching the rocky pass, Brünnhilde, looking down into the gorge, perceives Siegmund and Sieglinde. She watches them for a moment, then turns into the cave where her horse is, so that she is completely hidden from the audience. Siegmund and Sieglinde appear on the pass, Sieglinde hurrying in front. Siegmund tries to stop her.

**Siegmund** Wait here and rest ;  
Tarry a while !

**Sieglinde** Farther ! Farther !

**Siegmund** No farther now !  
Embraces her  
with tender  
force, straining  
her to him.  
O linger, woman most sweet !  
From bliss when most blissful  
Breaking away,  
In headlong haste  
Far thou hast fled,

## THE VALKYRIE

So fleet that I lagged behind :  
Through wood and field,  
Over cliff and scaur,  
Voiceless, silent,  
Speeding along,  
Thy foot stopped for no call.

[*Sieglinde stares wildly before her.*

Tarry a while !  
Say but a word,  
Ending this speechless dread !  
See, thy brother  
Holds thee, his bride :  
Siegmund's comrade art thou !

Sieglinde  
*Gazes into his eyes with growing rapture, throws her arms passionately round his neck and remains so for some time. She then starts up in wild terror.*

Away ! Away !  
Fly the profaned one !  
Unholy  
The clasp of her arm ;  
In shame, dishonoured,  
This body died.  
Fling it from thee,  
Flee from the corpse !  
The winds scatter her dust—  
The foul one who loved one so fair !  
When in his loving embrace  
She rested in rapture pure,  
And all the love of the man  
Was hers who loved him alone—  
When on holiest height,  
When bliss was at sweetest,  
And sense and soul  
Were steeped in delight,  
Hatred and loathing  
Of hideous dishonour  
Shook the disgraced one,  
Filled her with fear—

## THE VALKYRIE

The thought she once had obeyed.  
Bridegroom unloving, unloved.

Leave the accurst one,  
Far let her fly!  
An outcast she is,  
Bereft of grace!  
Ah, I must leave  
The purest of heroes;  
I cannot be thine,  
To sully thy glory:

Scorn to bring on the brother,  
Shame to the rescuing friend!

Siegmund

For the shame and dishonour,  
Pay the transgressor's blood!  
No farther, then, flying,  
Here let us wait him;  
**Here—here I shall slay him:**  
When Nothung's point  
Shall pierce his heart,  
All thy wrongs will be avenged!

Sieglinde

*Starts up and  
listens.*

Hark! The bugles!  
Dost thou not hear?  
All around,  
Angry and shrill,  
From wood and vale  
Clamour their calls.  
Hunding has wakened  
From slumber deep;  
Kinsmen and hounds  
He summons together;  
How the dogs howl,  
Urged on hotly,  
**Loud-baying to heaven**  
**Of the vows and the wedlock profaned!**

[*Gazes before her as if gone crazed.*

## THE VALKYRIE

Where art thou, Siegmund ?  
Art thou still here,  
Fervently loved one,  
Beautiful brother ?  
Let thine eyes like stars  
Shine again on me softly ;  
Turn not away  
From the outcast woman's kiss !

[She throws herself sobbing on his breast, and presently starts up in terror again.

Hark ! O hark !  
That is Hunding's horn !  
With his hounds full force,  
In haste he comes.  
No sword helps  
When the dogs attack :—  
Throw it down, Siegmund !  
Siegmund, where art thou ?  
Ha, there ! I see thee now !  
Horrible sight !  
Eager-fanged  
Are the bloodhounds for flesh ;  
Ah, what to them  
Is thy noble air !  
By the feet they seize thee  
With terrible teeth ;  
Alas !  
Thou faldest with splintered sword :—  
The ash-tree sinks—  
The trunk is rent !  
Brother ! My brother !  
Siegmund—ha !

[She falls fainting into his arms.

Brünnhilde with her horse, at the mouth of the cave

See p. 123





## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

Sister! Belovèd!

[He listens to her breathing, and, when convinced that she still lives, lets her slide down so that, as he himself sinks into a sitting posture, her head rests upon his knees. In this position both remain till the end of the following scene. A long silence, during which Siegmund bends over Sieglinde with tender concern, and presses a long kiss on her brow.

Brünnhilde, leading her horse, comes out of the cave and walks slowly and solemnly towards the front. She pauses and watches Siegmund from a distance, then advances slowly again and stops when she gets nearer. In one hand she carries her shield and spear, the other rests on her horse's neck, and thus she gravely stands looking at Siegmund.

Brünnhilde

Siegmund!  
Look on me  
Whom thou  
Must follow soon!

Siegmund

Who art thou, say,  
*Looking up at her.* That dost stand so fair and so stern?

Brünnhilde

Death-doomed are they  
Who look upon me;  
Who sees me  
Bids farewell to the light of life.  
On the battle-field only  
Heroes view me;  
He whom I greet  
Is chosen and must go.

Siegmund

When thou dost lead,  
*Looks into her* Whither follows the hero?  
eyes with a long steadfast and searching gaze, then bows his head in thought and finally turns resolutely to her again.

## THE VALKYRIE

Brünnhilde

I lead thee  
To Wotan ;  
The lot he has cast :  
To Walhall must thou come.

Siegwund

In Walhall's hall  
Wotan alone shall I find ?

Brünnhilde

A glorious host  
Of heroes slain  
Will greet thee there  
With love holy and high.

Siegmund

Say if in Walhall  
Sojourns my father, Wälse.

Brünnhilde

His father there  
Will the Wälsung find.

Siegmund

*Tenderly.*

Will any woman  
Welcome me there ?

Brünnhilde

Wishmaidens  
Serve there serene :  
Wotan's daughter  
Wine will bring for thy cup.

Siegmund

High art thou  
And holy of aspect,  
O Wotan's child :  
But one thing tell me, divine one !  
The sister and bride,  
Shall she follow the brother ?  
Will Siegmund find Sieglinde there ?

Brünnhilde

Air of earth  
Still she must breathe here ;  
Siegmund will find no Sieglinde there !

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund  
*Bends tenderly  
over Sieglinde,  
kisses her softly  
on the brow,  
and turns again  
quietly to  
Brünnhilde.*

Brünnhilde

Siegmund

Brünnhilde

Siegmund

Brünnhilde

Siegmund

Brünnhilde

Siegmund

Brünnhilde

Siegmund

Brünnhilde

Then greet for me Walhall,  
Greet for me Wotan,  
Greet for me Wälse  
And all the heroes,  
Wishmaidens lovely  
Greet thou also,  
And tell them I will not come !

Nay, having looked  
On the Valkyrie's face,  
Thou must follow her forth !

Where Sieglinde dwells  
In weal or woe,  
There will Siegmund dwell also ;  
My face grew not pale  
When I beheld thee :  
Thou canst not force me to go !

Force thee can none  
While thou dost live ;  
Fool, what will force thee is death :  
Warning of death  
Is what I bring.

What hero to-day  
Shall hew me down ?

Hunding's hand in the fight.

Use threats more baleful  
Than blows from Hunding !  
Lurkest thou here  
Longing for strife,  
Fix on him for thy prey.  
I think it is he who will fall !

Nay, Wälsung,  
Doubt not my word ;  
Thine is the death decreed.

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund

Knowest this sword?

Who gave the sword

Gave triumph sure:

With this sword I laugh at thy threats.

Brünnhilde

*In a loud voice.*

He whose it was

Now dooms thee to death,

For the magic spell he withdraws!

Siegmund

*Vehemently.*

Hush! Alarm not

The slumberer here!

*[In an outburst of grief he bends tenderly over Sieglinde.]*

Woe! Woe!

Woman most sweet!

Most sad and ill-starred of all true ones!

Against thee rages

The whole world in arms,

And I who was all thy defence,

For whom thou the world hast defied—

To think I cannot

Shield thee, but, beaten

In battle, thy trust must betray!

O shame on him

Who bestowed the sword,

And triumph now turns to scorn!

If I must fall thus,

I fare to no Walhall—

Hella hold me for aye!

*[He bends low over Sieglinde.]*

Brünnhilde

*Moved.*

So little prizest thou

Life everlasting?

*[Slowly and with hesitation.]*

All thy care

Is thy helpless wife

Who, sad and weary,

## THE VALKYRIE

Heavily hangs in thy arms ?  
Precious only is she ?

Siegmund  
*Looking up at her bitterly.*

Though young and fair  
Thou shinest to me,  
In my heart I know thee  
Cruel and cold !  
Canst thou do nothing  
But mock me, begone,  
Malicious, merciless maid !  
Or if thou must gloat  
Upon my distress,  
Then gloat and feast thyself full !  
With my woe  
Solace thy envious soul :—  
But of Walhall's loveless raptures  
Nothing more let me hear !

Brünnhilde

I see the distress  
That is tearing thy heart ;  
The doomed hero's holy  
Sorrow I feel.  
Siegmund, thy wife be my charge,  
Protected safely by me.

Siegmund

No other than I  
While my wife is living shall guard her.  
If death be my lot  
I will slay the slumberer first !

Brünnhilde  
*With increasing emotion.*

Wälsung ! Madman !  
Listen to me !  
Entrust her to me  
For the pledge's sake  
That she carries of thee and thy love !

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund  
*Drawing his sword.*

This sword  
That a true man received from a false—  
This sword  
That fails me when facing the foe ;  
Worthless when turned on the foe,  
Will serve me when turned on the friend.

[He points the sword at Sieglinde.

Two lives now  
Laugh to thee here :  
Take them, Nothung,  
Envious steel !

Take them with one fell stroke !

Brünnhilde  
*With a passionate outburst of sympathy.*

Forbear, Wälsung !  
Listen to me !  
Sieglinde spare thou,  
And Siegmund too shall be spared !  
'Tis thus decreed,  
Recast the lot is !  
Thou, Siegmund,  
Shalt be blest and prevail !

[Horns are heard in the distance.

Hark to the horn !  
Prepare for the fray ;  
Trust to the sword  
And strike without fear :  
Thy sword shall prove strong  
Thee the Valkyrie faithfully shields !  
Farewell, Siegmund,  
Hero most blest !

On the field again I shall find thee.

[She rushes away and disappears with her horse down a gorge on the right. Siegmund gazes after her joyful and exultant. The stage has gradually grown dark. Heavy storm-clouds have gathered in the background, and hide the cliffs, gorge, and rocky pass completely from view.

## THE VALKYRIE

Siegmund  
*Bending over  
Sieglinde, listens  
to her breathing.*

Charmèd slumber  
Softly soothes

The dear one's pain and grief.  
When the Valkyrie came, perchance  
She brought her this blissful repose ;  
Else would the grimly fought fight  
Have terrified one in such woe.

Lifeless seems she,  
And yet she lives ;  
The sad one by smiling  
Dreams is caressed.  
In slumber lie soft  
Till the fight is won

And peace shall end thy pain !

[He lays her gently on the rocky seat and  
kisses her brow in farewell. Then, hearing  
Hunding's horn sound, he starts up  
with resolution.

Thou who dost call,  
Arm for the fray ;  
Thy dues in full  
Thou shalt have :

[He draws his sword.

Nothung pays him his debt.

[He hastens to the back and, on reaching the  
pass, immediately disappears in a dark  
thunder-cloud, from which, the next instant,  
a flash of lightning breaks.

Sieglinde  
*Begins to move  
uneasily in her  
dreams.*

Would but my father come back !  
With the boy he still roams in the wood.

Mother ! Mother !

I am afraid—

The strangers seem  
So harsh and unfriendly !  
Fumes that stifle—

## THE VALKYRIE

Dense and black smoke—  
Fierce are the flames,  
And closer they flare—  
On fire the house !  
O help us, brother !  
Siegmund ! Siegmund !

[She starts up. Violent thunder and lightning.  
Siegmund ! Ha !

[She stares about her in growing terror.  
Almost the whole of the stage is veiled by  
black thunder-clouds. Hunding's horn is  
heard close at hand.

Hunding's voice  
*From the  
mountain pass  
in the background.*

Wehwalt ! Wehwalt !  
Stand there and fight,  
Or with the hounds I will hold thee !

Siegmund's voice  
*From farther  
back in the  
gorge.*

Where hidest thou,  
That I have missed thee thus ?  
Halt, that I may find thee !

Sieglinde  
*Listening in  
terrible fear.*

Hunding—Siegmund—  
Could I but see them !

Hunding

Come hither, impious wooer !  
Here by Fricka be slain !

Siegmund  
*Also from the  
pass now.*

Thou thinkest me weaponless,  
Coward, still.  
Threat not with women !  
Thyself now fight me,  
Lest Fricka fail thee at need !  
For see, from the tree  
That grows by thy hearth  
I drew undaunted the sword ;  
Come and try the taste of its steel !

## THE VALKYRIE

**Sieglinde**  
*With all her  
strength.*

Hold your hands, ye men there !  
Strike me dead first !

[She rushes towards the pass, but is suddenly dazzled by a light which flashes forth from above the combatants to the right, and staggers aside as if blinded.

**Brünnhilde's voice**

Strike him, Siegmund !  
Trust to the sword !

[Brünnhilde appears in the glare of light, floating above Siegmund, and protecting him with her shield. Just as Siegmund is aiming a deadly blow at Hunding a glowing red light breaks through the clouds from the left, in which Wotan appears, standing over Hunding and holding his spear across in front of Siegmund.

**Wotan's voice**

Back ! Back from the spear !  
In splinters the sword !

[Brünnhilde with her shield recoils in terror before Wotan ; Siegmund's sword breaks in splinters on the outstretched spear. Hunding plunges his sword into the disarmed man's breast. Siegmund falls down dead, and Sieglinde, who has heard his death-sigh, sinks to the ground as if lifeless. With Siegmund's fall the lights on both sides disappear. Dense clouds shroud all but the foreground in darkness. Through these Brünnhilde is dimly seen turning in wild haste to Sieglinde.

**Brünnhilde**

To horse, that I may save thee !

She lifts Sieglinde up quickly on to her horse, which is standing near the side ravine, and immediately disappears. Thereupon the clouds divide in the middle, so that Hunding, who has just drawn his sword out of Siegmund's breast, is distinctly seen. Wotan, surrounded by clouds, stands on a rock behind, leaning on his spear and gazing sorrowfully on Siegmund's body.

## THE VALKYRIE

Wotan  
*To Hunding.*

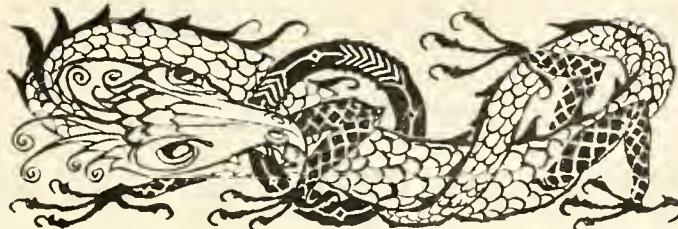
Begone, slave !  
Kneel before Fricka ;  
Tell her that Wotan's spear  
Has slain what mocked her might.  
Go ! Go !

[Before the contemptuous wave of his hand  
Hunding falls dead to the ground. Suddenly  
breaking out in terrible anger.

But Brünnhilde !  
Woe to the guilty one !  
Woe to her  
As soon as my horse  
Shall overtake her in flight !

[He vanishes with thunder and lightning.  
The curtain falls quickly.





## THE THIRD ACT

*On the top of a rocky mountain*

*On the right the stage is bounded by a pine-wood. On the left is the entrance to a cave, above which the rock rises to its highest point. At the back the view is quite open. Rocks of varying heights form the edge of the precipice. Clouds fly at intervals past the mountain peak as if driven by storm. Gerhilde, Ortlinde, Waltraute, and Schwertleite have taken up their position on the rocky peak above the cave. They are in full armour.*

**Gerhilde**

*On the highest point, calling towards the background, where a dense cloud is passing.*

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Heiaha ! Heiaha !  
Helmwige ! Here !  
Guide hither thy horse !

**Helmwige's voice**

*At the back.*

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !  
Heiaha !

[*A flash of lightning comes from the cloud, showing a Valkyrie on horseback, on whose saddle hangs a slain warrior. The apparition, approaching the cliff, passes from left to right.*

**Gerhilde,  
Waltraute,  
and Schwertleite**  
*Calling to her as she draws near.*

Heiaha ! Heiaha !

[*The cloud with the apparition vanishes to the right behind the wood.*

## THE VALKYRIE

<b>Ortlinde</b> <i>Calling into the wood.</i>	Thy stallion make fast By Ortlinde's mare ; Gladly my grey Will graze by thy chestnut !
<b>Waltraute</b> <i>Calling towards the wood.</i>	Who hangs at thy saddle ?
<b>Helmwige</b> <i>Coming out of the wood.</i>	Sintolt, the Hegeling !
<b>Schwertleite</b>	Fasten thy chestnut Far from the grey then ; Ortlinde's mare Carries Wittig, the Irming !
<b>Gerhilde</b> <i>Descending a little towards the others.</i>	And Sintolt and Wittig Always were foemen !
<b>Ortlinde</b> <i>Springing up and runs to the wood.</i>	Heiaha ! Heiaha ! The horse is kicking my mare !
<b>Gerhilde</b> <i>Laughing aloud with Helmwig and Schwertleite.</i>	The heroes' feud Makes foes of the horses !
<b>Helmwige</b> <i>Calling back into the wood.</i>	Quiet, Brownie ! Pick not a quarrel.
<b>Waltraute</b> <i>On the highest point, where listening towards the right /she has taken Gerhilde's place as watcher, calling towards the right-hand side of the background.</i>	Hoioho ! Hoioho ! Siegrune, come ! What keeps thee so long ?
<b>Siegrune's voice</b> <i>From the back on the right.</i>	Work to do. Are the others all there ?

## THE VALKYRIE

**The Valkyries**

*In answer, their  
gestures, as well as a bright light behind the wood,  
showing that Siegrune has just arrived there.*

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !

Heiaha ! Heiaha !

**Grimgerde's and**

**Rossweisse's voiees**

*From the back on the left.*

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !

Heiaha !

**Waltraute**

*Towards the left.*

Grimgerd' and Rossweisse !

**Gerhilde**

Together they ride.

*[In a cloud which passes across the stage from  
the left, and from which lightning flashes,  
Rossweisse and Grimgerde appear, also on  
horseback, each carrying a slain warrior  
on her saddle.]*

**Helmwige,**

**Ortlinde,**

**and Siegrune**

We greet you, valiant ones !

Rossweiss' and Grimgerde !

*Have come out of the wood and wave their hands from the edge of the  
precipice to Rossweisse and Grimgerde, who disappear behind the wood.*

**Rossweisse's and**

**Grimgerde's voiees**

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !

Heiaha !

All the other

Valkyries

Hojotoho ! Hojotoho !

Heiaha ! Heiaha !

**Gerhilde**

*Calling into the wood.*

Your horses lead into

The wood to rest !

**Ortlinde**

*Also calling into  
the wood.*

Lead the mares far off

One from the other,

Until our heroes'

Anger is laid !

**Helmwige**

*The others laughing*

The grey has paid

For the heroes' anger.

## THE VALKYRIE

Rossweisse and Grimgerde <i>Coming out of the wood.</i>	Hojotoho !   Hojotoho !
The Valkyries	Be welcomed !   Be welcomed !
Schwertleite	Went ye twain on one quest ?
Grimgerde	No, singly we rode, And met but to-day.
Rossweisse	If we all are assembled Why linger longer ? To Walhall let us away, Bringing to Wotan the slain.
Helmwige	We are but eight ; Wanting is one.
Gerhilde	By the brown-eyed Wälsung Brünnhilde tarries.
Waltraute	Until she joins us Here we must wait ; Warfather's greeting Grim were indeed If we returned without her !
Siegrune <i>On the look-out, calling towards the back.</i>	Hojotoho !   Hojotoho ! This way !   This way ! [ <i>To the others.</i> In hottest haste riding, Hither she comes.
The Valkyries <i>All hasten to the look-out.</i>	Hojotoho !   Hojotoho ! Heiaha ! Brünnhilde, hei ! [ <i>They watch her with growing astonishment.</i>

## THE VALKYRIE

Waltraute	See, she leads Woodward Her staggering horse.
Grimgerde	From swift riding How Grane pants !
Rossweisse	No Valkyrie's flight Ever so fast was.
Ortlinde	What lies on her saddle ?
Helmwige	That is no man !
Siegrune	'Tis a woman, see !
Gerhilde	Where found she the maid ?
Schwertleite	Has she no greeting For her sisters ?
Waltraute <i>Calling down very loudly.</i>	Heiaha ! Brünnhilde ! Dost thou not hear ?
Ortlinde	From her horse Let us help our sister.
The Valkyries	[Helmwige and Gerhilde run to the wood, followed by Siegrune and Rossweisse.]
	Hojotoho ! Hojotoho ! Heiaha !
Waltraute <i>Looking into the wood.</i>	To earth has sunk Grane the strong one !
Grimgerde	From the saddle swift She snatches the maid.
The other Valkyries <i>Running to the wood.</i>	Sister ! Sister ! What has occurred ?

[The Valkyries all return to the stage;  
Brünnhilde accompanies them, leading and  
supporting Sieglinde.]

## THE VALKYRIE

Brünnhilde  
*Breathless.*

Shield me and help  
In dire distress !

The Valkyries

Whence rodest thou hither,  
Hasting so hard ?  
Thus ride they only who flee.

Brünnhilde

I flee for the first time  
And am pursued :  
Warfather follows close.

The Valkyries  
*Terribly alarmed.*

Hast thou gone crazy ?  
Speak to us ! What ?  
Pursued by Warfather ?  
Flying from him ?

Brünnhilde  
*Turns and looks  
out anxiously,  
then comes back.*

O sisters, spy  
From the rocky peak !  
Look north and tell me  
If Warfather nears !

[Ortlinde and Waltraute spring up the peak  
to the look-out.

Quick ! Is he in sight ?

Ortlinde

A storm from the north  
Is nearing.

Waltraute

Darkly the clouds  
Congregate there.

The Valkyries

Warfather, riding  
His sacred steed, comes !

Brünnhilde

The wrathful hunter,  
He rides from the north ;  
He nears, he nears, in fury !  
Save this woman !  
Sisters your help !

Brünnhilde. "I flee for the first time  
And am pursued :  
Warfather follows close.

He nears, he nears, in fury !  
Save this woman !  
Sisters, your help ! "

See p. 138





## THE VALKYRIE

The Valkyries

What threatens the woman ?

Brünnhilde

Hark to me quickly !

Sieglinde this is,

Siegmund's sister and bride.

Wotan his fury

Against the Wälsungs has turned.

He told me

That to-day I must fail

The brother in strife ;

But with my shield

I guarded him safe,

Daring the God,

Who slew him himself with his spear.

Siegmund fell ;

But I fled,

Bearing his bride.

To protect her

And from the stroke

Of his wrath to hide,

I hastened, O my sisters, to you !

The Valkyries

*Full of fear.*

O foolish sister,

How mad thy deed !

Woe's me ! Woe's me !

Brünnhilde, lost one !

Mocked, disobeyed

By Brünnhilde

Warfather's holy command !

Waltraute

*On the look-out.*

Darkness comes

From the north like the night.

Ortlinde

*On the look-out.*

Hither steering,

Rages the storm.

## THE VALKYRIE

Rossweisse, Grimerde, and Schwertleite	Wildly neighs Warfather's horse !
Helmwige, Gerhilde, and Siegrune	Panting, snorting it comes !
Brünnhilde	Woe to the woman If here she is found, For Wotan has vowed The Wälsungs shall perish ! The horse that is swiftest Which of you lends, That forth the woman may fly ?
Siegrune	Wouldst have us too Madly rebel ?
Brünnhilde	Rossweisse, sister, Wilt lend me thy racer !
Rossweisse	The fleet one from Wotan Never yet fled.
Brünnhilde	Helmwige, hear me !
Helmwige	I flout not our father.
Brünnhilde	Waltraute ! Gerhilde ! Give me your horse ! Schwertleite ! Siegrune ! See my distress ! Stand by me now Because of our love : . Rescue this woman in woe !

## THE VALKYRIE

Sieglinde

*Who until now  
has been staring  
gloomily and coldly  
before her, starts  
up with a repel-  
lent gesture as  
Brünnhilde  
encircles her with  
a warm,  
protective embrace.*

c

Concern thyself not about me ;  
Death is all that I crave.  
From off the field  
Who bade thee thus bear me ?  
For there perchance  
By the selfsame weapon  
That struck down Siegmund  
I too had died,  
Made one with him  
In the hour of death.  
Far from Siegmund—  
Siegmund, from thee !  
O cover me, Death,  
From the sorrow !  
Wouldst thou not have me  
Curse thee for flying ?

Thou must hearken, maid, to my prayer :  
Pierce thou my heart with thy sword !

Brünnhilde

*Impressively.*

Live for the sake  
Of thy love, O woman !  
Rescue the pledge  
Thou has gotten from him :  
The Wälsung's child thou shalt bear !

Sieglinde

*Gives a violent  
start; suddenly  
her face beams  
with sublime joy.*

Save me, ye bold ones !  
Rescue my child !  
Shelter me, maidens,  
And strong be your shield !

*[An ever-darkening thunderstorm nears from  
the back.]*

Waltraute

*On the look-out.*

The storm has drawn nigh.

Ortlinde

Fly, all who fear it !

## THE VALKYRIE

The Valkyries

Hence with the woman ;  
Here she is lost :  
The Valkyries dare not  
Shield her from doom !

Sieglinde  
*On her knees  
before Brünnhilde.*

Save me, O maid !  
Rescue the mother !

Brünnhilde  
*Raises Sieglinde  
with sudden  
resolve.*

Away then, and swiftly !  
Alone thou shalt fly.  
I—stay in thy stead,  
Victim of Wotan's anger.  
I will hold here  
The God in his wrath,  
Till I know thee past reach of his rage.

Sieglinde

Say, whither shall my flight be ?

Brünnhilde

Which of you, sisters,  
Eastward has journeyed ?

Siegrune

A forest stretches  
Far in the east ;  
The Nibelung's hoard  
By Fafner thither was borne.

Schwertleite

There as a dread  
Dragon he sojourns,  
And in a cave  
Keeps watch over Alberich's ring.

Grimgerde

'Tis uncanny there  
For a woman's home.

Brünnhilde

And yet from Wotan's wrath  
Shelter sure were the wood ;  
For he both fears  
And keeps far from the place.

"There as a dread  
Dragon he sojourns,  
And in a cave  
Keeps watch over Alberich's ring "

See p. 142



Arthur Rackham 1910



## THE VALKYRIE

**W**altraute  
*On the look-out.*

Raging, Wotan  
Rides to the rock !

**T**he Valkyries

Brünnhilde, hark !  
Like a storm-wind he comes !

**B**rünnhilde  
*Urgently.*

Flee then swiftly,  
Thy face to the east !  
Boldly enduring,  
Defy every ill—  
Hunger and thirst,  
Briar and stone ;  
Laugh, whether gnawed  
By anguish or want !  
For one thing know  
And hold to always—

The world's most glorious hero  
Hideth, O woman, thy sheltering womb !

[She takes the pieces of Siegmund's sword  
from under her breast-plate and gives  
them to Sieglinde.

The splintered sword's pieces  
Guard securely ;

From the field where slain was  
His father I brought them.  
And now I name  
Him who one day  
The sword new-welded shall swing—  
“Siegfried” rejoice and prevail !

**S**ieglinde  
*Greatly moved.*

Sublimest wonder !  
Glorious maid !  
From thee high solace  
I have received !  
For him whom we loved  
I save the beloved one.  
May my thanks one day

# THE VALKYRIE

Sweet reward bring !  
Fare thou well !  
Be blest by Sieglind' in woe !

[She hastens away to the right in front. The rocky peak is surrounded by black thunder-clouds. A fearful storm rages from the back. A fiery glow increases in strength to the right.

Wotan's voice

Ortlinde  
and Waltraute  
*Coming down  
from the look-out.*

The Valkyries

Brünnhilde

The Valkyries  
*Fly towards the  
rocky point in  
fear, drawing  
Brünnhilde with  
them.*

Stay, Brünnhilde !

The rock is reached  
By horse and rider !

[Brünnhilde, after following Sieglind with her eyes for a while, goes towards the background, looks into the wood, and comes forward again fearfully.

Woe, Woe ! Brünnhilde !  
Vengeance he brings !

Ah, sisters, help !  
My courage fails !  
His wrath will crush me  
Unless ye ward off its weight.

This way, then, lost one !  
Hide from his sight !  
Cling closely to us,  
And heed not his call !

[They hide Brünnhilde in their midst and look anxiously towards the wood, which is now lit up by a bright fiery glow, while in the background it has grown quite dark.

Woe ! Woe !  
Raging, Wotan  
Swings from his horse !  
Hither hastens  
His foot for revenge !

## THE VALKYRIE

Wotan                  Where is Brünnhilde ?  
*Comes from the*      Where is the guilty one ?  
*wood in a terrible*    Would ye defy me  
*state of wrath*        And hide the rebel ?  
*and excitement and goes towards the Valkyries on*  
*the height, looking angrily for Brünnhilde.*

The Valkyries    Fearful and loud thy rage is !  
                  By what misdeed have thy daughters  
                  Vexed and provoked thee  
                  To terrible wrath ?

Wotan                  Fools, would ye flout me ?  
                  Have a care, rash ones !  
                  I know : Brünnhilde  
                  Fain ye would hide.  
                  Leave her, the lost one  
                  Cast off for ever,  
                  Even as she  
                  Cast off her worth !

The Valkyries    To us fled the pursued one,  
                  In her need praying for help,  
                  Dismayed and fearful,  
                  Dreading thy wrath.  
                  For our trembling sister  
                  Humbly we beg  
That thy first wild rage be calmed.

Wotan                  Weak-hearted  
                  And womanish brood !  
                  Is this your valour,  
                  Given by me ?  
                  For this have I reared you  
                  Bold for the fight,  
                  Made you relentless  
                  And hard of heart

## THE VALKYRIE

That ye wild ones might weep and whine  
When my wrath on a faithless one falls ?

Learn, wretched whimperers,  
What was the crime  
Of her for whom  
Ye are shedding those tears.  
No one but she  
Knew what most deeply I brooded ;  
No one but she  
Pierced to the source of my being ;  
Through her deeds  
All, I wished to be, came to birth.  
This sacred bond  
So completely she broke  
That she defied me,  
Opposing my will,  
Her master's command  
Openly mocked,  
And against me pointed the spear  
That she held from me alone.  
Hearest, Brünnhilde ?  
Thou who didst hold  
Thy helm and spear,  
Grace and delight,  
Life and name as my gift !  
Hearing my voice thus accusing,  
Dost hide from me in terror,  
A coward who shirks her doom ?

Brünnhilde

*Steps out from the  
band of Valkyries, and humbly but with a firm step descends  
from the rocky peak until within a short distance from Wotan.*

Wotan

Here I am, Father,  
Awaiting thy sentence !  
I—sentence thee not ;  
Thou hast shaped thy doom for thyself.  
Through my will only

## THE VALKYRIE

Wert thou at all,  
Yet against my will thou hast worked ;  
Thy part it was  
To fulfil my commands,  
Yet against me thou hast commanded ;  
Wish-maid  
Thou wert to me,  
Yet thy wish has dared to cross mine ;  
Shield-maid  
Thou wert to me,  
Yet against me raised was thy shield ;  
Lot-chooser  
Thou wert to me :  
Against me the lot thou hast chosen ;  
Hero-rouser  
Thou wert to me :  
Thou hast roused up heroes against me.  
What once thou wert  
Wotan has told thee :  
What thou art now,  
Demand of thyself !  
Wish-maid thou art no more ;  
Valkyrie thou art no longer :—  
What now thou art  
For aye thou shalt be !

Brünnhilde  
*Greatly terrified.*

Thou dost cast me off ?  
Ah, can it be so ?

Wotan

No more shall I send thee from Walhall  
To seek upon fierce  
Fields for the slain ;  
With heroes no more  
Shalt thou fill my hall :  
When the high Gods sit at banquet,  
No more shalt thou pour  
The wine in my horn ;

## THE VALKYRIE

No more shall I kiss  
The mouth of my child.  
Among heaven's hosts  
Numbered no longer,  
Outcast art thou  
From the kinship of Gods ;  
Our bond is broken in twain,  
And from my sight henceforth thou now  
art banned.

**The Valkyries**  
*Leave their places  
in the excitement, and come a little farther down the rocks.*

Woe's me ! Woe !  
Sister ! O sister !

**Brünnhilde**

All that thou gavest  
Thou dost recall ?

**Wotan**

Conquering thee, one shall take all !  
For here on the rock  
Bound thou shalt be,  
Defenceless in sleep,  
Charmed and enchained ;  
The man who chances this way  
And awakes her, shall master the maid.

**The Valkyries**  
*Come down from  
the height in  
great excitement,  
and in terrified  
groups surround  
Brünnhilde, who  
lies half kneeling  
before Wotan.*

O stay, Father !  
The sentence recall.  
Shall the maiden droop  
And be withered by man ?  
O dread one, avert thou  
The crying disgrace :  
For as sisters share we her shame.

**Wotan**

Have ye not heard  
Wotan's decree ?  
From out your band  
Shall your traitorous sister be banished,  
No more to ride

The ride of the Valkyries

See p. 149





## THE VALKYRIE

Through the clouds her swift steed to the  
battle ;  
Her maidenhood's flower  
Will fade away ;  
Her grace and her favour  
Her husband's will be ;  
Her husband will rule her  
And she will obey ;  
Beside the hearth she will spin,  
To all mockers a mark for scorn.

[*Brünnhilde sinks with a cry to the ground.  
The Valkyries, horror-stricken, recoil from  
her violently.*

Fear ye her fate ?  
Then fly from the lost one !  
Swiftly forsake  
And flee from her far !  
Let one but venture  
Near her to linger,  
Seek to befriend her,  
Defying my will—  
The fool shall share the same doom :  
I warn you, ye bold ones, well !  
Up and away !  
Hence, and return not !  
Get ye gone at a gallop,  
Trouble is rife else for you here !

### The Valkyries

Separate with a  
wild cry and rush  
into the wood.

### Woe ! Woe !

[*Black clouds settle thickly on the cliff ; a rushing sound is heard in the wood. From the clouds breaks a vivid flash of lightning, by which the Valkyries are seen packed closely together, and riding wildly away with loose bridles. The storm soon subsides ; the thunder-clouds gradually disperse. In the following scene the weather becomes fine again and twilight falls, followed at the close by night.*

## THE VALKYRIE

*Wotan and Brünnhilde, who lies stretched at his feet, remain behind alone.  
A long solemn silence.*

**Brünnhilde**

*Begins to raise  
her head a little,  
and, commencing  
timidly, gains  
confidence as she  
proceeds.*

**Was the offence**

**So shameful and foul**

**That to such shame the offender should be  
doomed?**

**Was what I did**

**So base and so vile**

**That I must suffer abasement so low?**

**Was the dishonour**

**Truly so deep**

**That it must rob me of honour for aye?**

*[She raises herself gradually to a kneeling  
posture.]*

**O speak, Father!**

**In my eye looking,**

**Calming thy rage,**

**Taming thy wrath,**

**Explain why so dark**

**This deed of mine**

**That in thy implacable anger**

**It costs thee thy favourite child!**

**Wotan**

*His attitude  
unchanged, gravely and gloomily.*

**Ask of thy deed,**

**And that will show thee thy guilt!**

**Brünnhilde**

**I but fulfilled**

**Wotan's command.**

**Wotan**

**By my command**

**Didst thou fight for the Wälsung?**

**Brünnhilde**

**Yea, lord of the lots,**

**So ran thy decree.**

## THE VALKYRIE

Wotan

But I took back  
The order, changed the decree !

Brünnhilde

When Fricka had weaned  
Thy will from its purpose ;  
In yielding what she desired  
Thou wert a foe to thyself.

Wotan

*Softly and bitterly.* I thought thou didst understand me,  
And punished thy conscious revolt ;  
But coward and fool  
I seemed to thee !  
If I had not treason to punish  
Thou wouldest be unworthy my wrath.

Brünnhilde

I am not wise,  
But I knew well this one thing—  
That thy love was the Wälsung's ;  
I knew that, by discord  
Drawn two ways,  
This one thing thou hadst forgotten.  
The other only  
Couldst thou discern—  
What so bitterly  
Wounded thy heart :  
That Siegmund might not be shielded.

Wotan

And yet thou didst dare  
To shield him, knowing 'twas so ?

Brünnhilde

*Beginning softly.*

Because I the one thing  
Had kept in my eye,  
While by twofold desire  
Divided wert thou,  
Blindly thy back on him turning !  
She who wards thy back  
From the foe in the field,

## THE VALKYRIE

She saw alone  
What thou sawest not :—  
Siegmund I beheld.  
Bringing him doom  
I approached ;  
I looked in his eyes,  
Gave ear to his words.  
I perceived the hero's  
Bitter distress ;  
Loud the lament  
Of the brave one resounded ;  
Uttermost love's  
Most terrible pang,  
Saddest of hearts  
Defying all odds—  
With my ear I heard,  
My eye beheld  
That which stirred the heart in my breast  
With trouble holy and strange.  
Shamed, astonished,  
Shrinking I stood.  
Then all my thought  
Was how I could serve him ;  
Triumph and death  
To share with Siegmund—  
That seemed, that only,  
The lot I could choose !  
Faithful to him  
Who taught my heart this love,  
And set me  
By the Wälsung's side as friend—  
Most faithful to him—  
Thy word I disobeyed.

Wotan

So thou hast done  
What I yearned so greatly to do—

## THE VALKYRIE

What a twofold fate  
Withheld from my desire !  
So easy seemed to thee  
Heart's delight in the winning,  
When burning woe  
In my heart flamed fierce,  
When terrible anguish  
Wrung my soul,  
When, to save the world  
That I loved, love's spring  
**In my tortured heart I imprisoned ?**  
Against my own self  
When I turned, to my torment,  
From swooning pain  
Arose in a frenzy,  
When a wild longing  
Burning like fire  
The fearful design in me woke  
In the ruins of my own world  
My unending sorrow to bury,

[*Somewhat freely.*

Thy heart was lapped  
In blissful delight.  
Trembling with rapture,  
Drunken with joy,  
Thy lips drank laughing  
The draught of love,  
While I drank of divine woe  
Mixed with wormwood and gall.

[*Dryly and shortly.*

By thy lightsome heart  
Henceforth be guided :  
**From me thou hast turned away !**  
I must renounce thee ;  
Together no more  
Shall we two whisper counsel ;

## THE VALKYRIE

Apart our paths lie,  
Sundered for ever,  
And so long as life lasts  
I, the God, dare nevermore greet thee !

Brünnhilde  
*Simply.*

Unfit was the foolish  
Maid for thee,  
Who, dazed by thy counsel,  
Grasped not thy mind  
When, to her, one counsel  
Alone appeared plain—  
To love what was loved by thee.  
If I must forth  
Where I shall not find thee,  
If the fast-woven bond  
Must be loosed,  
And half thy being  
Far from thee banished—  
A half once thine and thine only,  
O God, forget not that !—  
Thy other self  
Thou wilt not dishonour,  
Dealing out shame  
That will shame thee too ;  
Thine own honour were lowered,  
Were I a target for scorn !

Wotan

The lure of love  
Thou hast followed fain :  
Follow the man  
Who shall wield its might !

Brünnhilde

If I must go from Walhall,  
No more in thy work be a sharer,  
And if as my master  
A man I must serve,  
To braggart base

## THE VALKYRIE

Abandon me not !  
Not all unworthy  
Be he who wins !

Wotan With Wotan no part hast thou—  
He cannot fashion thy fate.

Brünnhilde By thee has been founded a race  
Too glorious to bring forth a coward ;  
One day must a matchless hero  
From Wälsung lineage spring.

Wotan Name not the Wälsungs to me !  
Renouncing thee,  
Them too I renounced ;  
Through envy they came to naught.

Brünnhilde She who turned from thee  
Rescued the race ;  
*[With an air of secrecy.]*  
Sieglinde bears  
Fruit holy and high ;  
In pain and woe  
Beyond woe known to woman  
She will bring forth  
What in fear she hides !

Wotan No shelter for her  
Seek at my hand,  
Nor for fruit that she may bear.

Brünnhilde The sword she has kept  
That thou gavest Siegmund.

Wotan *Violently.* And that I splintered with my spear.  
Strive not, O maid,  
My spirit to trouble !  
Await thou the lot  
Cast and decreed ;

## THE VALKYRIE

I cannot choose it or change !  
    But now I must forth,  
    Fare from thee far ;  
Too long I stay by thy side.  
    I must turn from thee,  
    As thou didst from me ;  
    I must not even  
    Know thy desire ;  
    Thy doom alone  
    I must see fulfilled !

Brünnhilde

And what is the doom  
    That I must suffer ?

Wotan

In slumber fast  
    Thou shalt be locked ;  
Wife thou shalt be to the man  
    Who finds and wakes thee from sleep !

Brünnhilde

*Falls on her knees.*

If fettering sleep  
    Fast must bind me,  
    An easy prey  
    To the basest coward,  
This one thing that in deep anguish  
    I plead for thou must accord !  
    O shield thou the sleeper  
    With soul-daunting terrors,

[*Firmly.*

That by a dauntless  
    Hero alone  
    Here on the rock  
    I may be found !

Wotan

Too much thou askest—  
    Too big a boon !

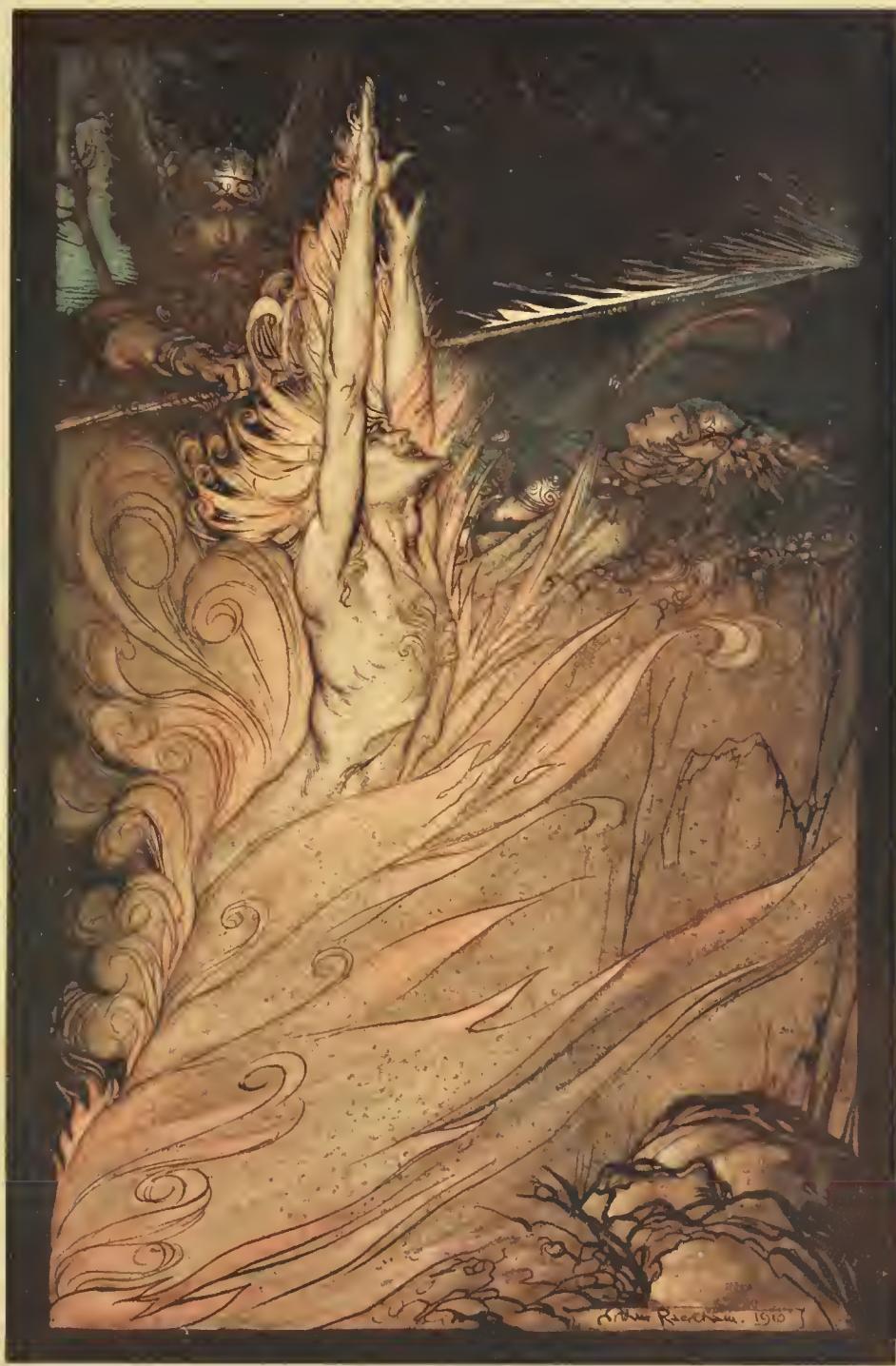
Brünnhilde

*Clasping his knees.*

This one thing  
    Grant me, O grant me !

Wotan. "Appear, flickering fire,  
Encircle the rock with thy flame !  
Loge ! Loge ! Appear !"

See p. 159



[Arthur Rackham. 1910.]



## THE VALKYRIE

The child that is clasping  
Thy knees crush dead ;  
Tread down thy dear one  
And shatter the maid ;  
Let her body perish,  
Pierced by thy spear,  
But, cruel one, expose her not  
To this crying shame !

[With wild ecstasy.

O cause a fire  
To burn at thy bidding,  
With flame fiercely flaring  
Girdle the rock,  
And may its tongue lick,  
And may its tooth eat  
The coward who, daring, rashly  
Approaches the terrible spot !

Wotan  
*Overcome and  
deeply stirred,  
turns quickly  
towards Brünn-  
hilde, raises her  
from her knees  
and looks into her  
eyes with emotion.*

Farewell, thou valiant,  
Glorious child !  
Thou the most holy  
Pride of my heart,  
Farewell ! Farewell ! Farewell !  
[Passionately.  
Must we be parted ?  
Shall I never more  
Give thee love's greeting ?  
Must thou no longer  
Gallop beside me,  
Nor bring me mead at banquet ?  
If I must lose thee,  
Whom I have loved so,  
The laughing delight of my eyes,  
For thee there shall burn  
A bridal fire brighter  
Than ever yet burned for a bride !

## THE VALKYRIE

Fiercely the flames  
Shall flare round thy bed,  
Flames dreadful, devouring,  
Daunting all cowards ;  
Let cravens flee  
From Brünnhilde's rock !  
One only shall set the bride free,  
One freer than I, the God !

[Moved and enraptured, Brünnhilde sinks on the breast of Wotan, who holds her in a long embrace ; then she throws back her head again, and, still embracing him, gazes into his eyes with emotion and awe.

Those eyes so lovely and bright  
That oft with smiles I caressed,  
Thy valour  
With a kiss rewarding  
When, sweetly lisped  
By thy childlike mouth,  
The praise of heroes I heard :  
Those eyes so radiant and fair  
That oft in storm on me shone  
When hopeless yearning  
My heart was wasting,  
And when the joy  
Of the world I longed for,  
While fears thronged thick around me—  
Once more to-day  
Gladdening me,  
Let them take this kiss  
Of fond farewell !  
On happier mortal  
May they yet shine ;  
On me, hapless immortal,  
Must they close, and for ever !

[He takes her head in both hands.

*As he moves slowly away, Wotan turns and looks sorrowfully  
back at Brünnhilde*

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Edward R. Bachelder 1910



## THE VALKYRIE

'Tis thus that the God  
From thee turns :  
He kisses thy Godhead away !

[He kisses her long on the eyes, and with these closed she sinks back softly into his arms, unconscious. He carries her gently to a low mossy mound, and lays her there beneath the broad-spreading pine-tree which overshadows it. He gazes at her and closes her helmet; his eyes then rest on the form of the sleeper, which he completely covers with the great steel shield of the Valkyries. Having done so, he moves slowly away, turning to take one more sorrowful look. Then he strides with solemn resolve to the middle of the stage, and points his sword towards a large rock.

Loge, hear !  
Hark to my word !  
I who found thee at first  
A fiery flame,  
And from whom thou didst vanish  
In wandering fire,  
I, who once bound,  
Bid thee break forth !  
Appear, flickering fire,  
Encircle the rock with thy flame !

[He strikes the rock three times with his spear during the following.

Loge ! Loge ! Appear !

[A gleam of fire issues from the stone and gradually becomes a fiery glow; then flickering flames break forth. Soon wild, shooting flames surround Wotan, who, with his spear, directs the sea of fire to encircle the rock. It spreads towards the background, so that the mountain is surrounded by flame.

## THE VALKYRIE

Let none who fears  
The spear of Wotan  
Adventure across this fire !

[He stretches out his spear as a ban, looks sorrowfully back at Brünnhilde, then moves slowly away, turning his head for a farewell gaze. Finally he disappears through the fire. The curtain falls.



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The sleep of Brünnhilde

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